PARADIGM OF POWER POLITICS AND LANGUAGE IN THE NOVELS OF ARUNDHATI ROY AND ARAVIND ADIGA

Ph.D. THESIS

by

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE
ROORKEE-247667 (INDIA)
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ROORKEE

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled **"PARADIGM OF POWER POLITICS AND LANGUAGE IN THE NOVELS OF ARUNDHATI ROY AND ARAVIND ADIGA"** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and submitted in the Department of Humanities & Social Sciences of the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee is an authentic record of my own work carried out during a period from July, 2012 to June, 2019 under the supervision of Dr. Binod Mishra, Associate Professor and Dr. Pashupati Jha, Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee.

The matter presented in this thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other Institution.

(LAL VEER ADITYA)

This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of our knowledge.

(Binod Mishra)
Supervisor

(Pashupati Jha)
Supervisor

The Ph.D. Viva-Voce Examination of **Lal Veer Aditya**, Research Scholar, has been held on …….. .

Signature of Supervisors **Chairman, SRC** **Signature of External Examiner**

Head of the Department

Dated:

ABSTRACT

This research work is an analysis of the theme of power politics and its language in the selected novels, namely; *The God of Small Things* (1997) by Arundhati Roy, and *The White Tiger* (2008) and *Last Man in Tower* (2011) by Aravind Adiga.

This study aims at examining the socio-political realities of contemporary India through covert and overt power politics going on all the time in success-driven society, where human values are relegated to the background for material gains, as found in the select novels of Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga. Only three novels are analysed to keep the focus of the thesis intact for an in-depth textual study. As language makes the major difference between a sociological study on the same topic and a literary work, so the related objective is to analyse the language of Roy and Adiga to link their themes of power struggle and resultant protest to that of languages used by them. The language used makes their novels a piece of literary protest. In the case of Roy, the protest is powerful but subdued and largely passive; in that of Adiga the physicality of protest is much more vehement and violent.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, "Introduction", includes the conceptual frame of the thesis, along with literary background of the selected novels of both the writers.

Chapter 2 named, "Paradigm of Power Politics and its Matching Language in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*", discusses how the novel has intensity of a tragedy because of the poignant death of Velutha and the lonely death of Ammu. The language in the novel is highly experimental to match the power politics of the theme. *The God of Small Things* is unique in its use of language through many innovations to make the reader feel the events directly. It is more a language of intuition than a formal intellectual expression.

The third chapter named, “Oppressor Strikes Back: Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger*”, extends the link between power politics and language in Adiga’s debut novel with the difference that Balram, the protagonist of the novel, is not as powerless as Ammu and Velutha. Balram does not leave himself to fate but fights back, even if he has to kill his master Ashok.

The fourth chapter, “Another Story of Power Game in Aravind Adiga’s *Last Man in Tower*,” presents the lonely, relentless struggle of Masterji with the formidable Dharmen Shah, the mighty builder of Mumbai. Masterji, in many ways, is a study in contrast if one takes the character of Balram. While Balram is pragmatic, Masterji is thorough idealist, who lives by his beliefs. Unlike Balram, he is a tragic figure, who lives with his ideals and dies for his ideals. This novel is the depiction of a colossal fight between a common man like Masterji and the corporate giant Shah. And it has global implication.

The fifth chapter, “Conclusion”, summarizes this study that how power politics governs socio-political life in India, and how a suitable language is needed after the modification of the conventional one of the colonial times.

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Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya, (From darkness lead me (us) to the light.)

"Prayer is an acknowledgement of your dependence on God and his direction for your life." ― Jim George

The process of returning to a thesis in order to produce a continuous argument is not quite easy; but careful reading of the primary texts always helps. Achieving this desired goal is an outcome of inspiration, encouragement, and the intellectual exercises of many individuals associated with me.

I face both God and my Guru. Whom should I bow first? I first bow to my Guru because he's the one who showed me the path to God. – Kabir

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Thanks are due to the persons who are ever subjected to the brutal game of power politics; they have registered their imprints in the pages of selected novels. May God help them come out of their miseries triumphantly.

Lal Veer Aditya

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CHAPTERS

Note: Font size in the thesis is 12, line spacing is 1.5 and works cited are given at the end of the work according to the guidelines of Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to explore and analyse the theme of power politics in the select novels, namely; *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy and *The White Tiger* and *Last Man in Tower* by Aravind Adiga. Broadly, these objectives can be summed up as follows:

1. Power politics here means a socio-political and cultural struggle in Indian society for grabbing power by any means and to retain that power at any cost by the oppressors. Also, related to it is the anger, protest, and retaliatory violence, by those exploited in the above game to claim their due space in society.

2. To analyse how the ongoing power politics is expressed in the above novels by the matching use of language that subtly indicates that power struggle.

3. And finally, how the two novelists succeed in keeping fictional art from slipping into mere propaganda by adopting a near-impartial attitude in depicting the scenario in such a way that achieves the goal of making readers aware of the pathetic plight of the oppressed in not being an overt activist.

Both, Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga, are winners of the Man Booker Prize in the years, 1997 and 2008 respectively. They have many other awards too. Both the novelists, who are unconventional in their original attitude, are also radical. It is imperative that they would use language in unconventional ways to match the purpose of their perception of reality.

Some of the theoretical backgrounds for this study are from various global and Indian thinkers. Michel Foucault in his *Power/Knowledge* (1977), has indicated how power structures through history, has forced the use of knowledge for gaining power in society. Ibrahim Frantz Fanon, in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), and "On Violence" becomes a bitter critique of imperialism and how powerful forces subjugate lesser people by exploiting their own language and vocabulary and forcing the natives to become their slaves. He has also coined "lumpenproletariat", the wretched among the common people, who have to protest against their masters for rightful place. Fanon speaks of violence, both in the process of colonization and decolonization, and the use of violence in both the process. He has finally used violence of wretched people that can claim their own space in the world.

Fanon, in his another work, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), has spoken of the suppressed people "as not simply those whose labour has been appropriated, but those whose sole inferiority complex has been created by death and burial of its local cultural originality" (18).

What is troublesome, is the cross current of repeated conflict between the exploiter and the exploited. As Gilles Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* (1994) narrates that, "repetition already plays upon repetition, and difference already plays upon differences. Repetitions repeat themselves, while the differentiator differentiates itself" (xix). This repetition of history has come to the point of saturation, in the sense that those who are deprived, are no longer in a mood to suffer any further and want a final battle. That has resulted into a lot of violence. This study has taken the three novels that depict the theme of power struggle very poignantly. It is apt to quote, Friedrich Nietzsche from *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1987): "A

quantum of force is equivalent to a quantum of drive" (45). Drive here suggests the subconscious urge of the deprived section of society.

Virginia Woolf in "Modern Novels" speaks of the situation of modern novelists and writers "that if a writer whether a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, and not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feelings and not upon convention, there would be unconventional work in unconventional style" (212). Even many psychologists like Alfred Adler, Carl Gustav Jung and Karen Horney, speak of the interaction between inferiority complex and compassion of creative of mind, and social realities around it. Those like Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga in contemporary times write about the urge of the oppressed and are also aware of the unconscious and subconscious mind, where this urge has been embedded for long. Earlier too, Henri Bergson, in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1901), has suggested different layers of the mind,

> The self consists of solidified upper layer, a crust, which is apparently stable whole person that is projected to the external world.... The real living being consists of the meaning, interpenetrating and constantly mobile selves that exist below the surface of the solidified crust (105).

So, the conventional novelists in the past were concerned about the conscious mind alone. The modern novelists go beyond and also write of what lies beneath. Although not a James Joyce or Virginia Woolf, Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga also write of the anger and protest buried in the subconscious mind of their characters. Bill Ashcroft et al. in *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), talk of abrogation of the imperial center and active appropriation of the language and the culture center. This idea also works for the selected novels of this

study, though these novels don't talk directly of the colonized and the colonizers.

Creative literature does not communicate so much through statements but more through suggestions. Literary language becomes a context with which many of the standard notions are either questioned or reinvented. Sometimes, they are subverted as well. Language of a writer, therefore, has close link with what he wants to say and how it is formulated in his mind and then on his pages.

Jacques Marie Émile Lacan (1977) points out that the formation of knowledge is possible through language, the form in which the language is expressed and defined subjectively.... I identify myself in language, but only by using myself in it like an object. (85-86) Ferdinand de Saussure et al. going one step further has asserted the fact that language determines thought and nature of thought of an individual. Z. N. Patil (1994) describes:

> Language, therefore, must be investigated within the social context of community that uses it. Similarly, literature, ... A work of literature can only be fully grasped by relating it to the total dynamics of social and historical events because the medium of its realization is a part of cultural tradition. ... Language is an important part of the culture of a particular group and its pattern (15).

S.C. Bhattacharya, in the forward to R.S. Gupta's (2000) *Directions in Indian Sociolinguistics*, has noted; "Language not only unites through its ability to communication, it also divides because it gets inextricably linked with ethnicity and 'power"(5). This linkage between language and society is further supported by Saryug Yadav (2010) in his "Language Society and Culture: A Study in Sense, Substance and Sensibility", who observes that "language does not

only constitute the sense and sociability of a person, but it also creates the texture of society and culture" (52). All these remarks on language are related to the ways in which both Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga express their emotion and ideology through characters and events in their novels.

The linguistic tools that Roy and Adiga mostly apply are acronyms, affixation, coinage, code-mixing, code-switching, lexical borrowings, translation, reduplication, etc. Acronym is defined as a morphological process, which forms a new word by combining initial letters of syllables. Andreas Sedlatschek in *Contemporary Indian English: Variation and Change* (2009) explains, "In Indian English, clipped words are as common as acronyms. Acronyms are used in Indian English because they "have a tendency to liking acronyms" (87). Affixation plays a major role in formation of new words. When one derives the diverse forms of the same word like speak, spoke, spoken, speaks, and speaking, it is called the inflexion. But when, one coins the new word like the speaker, which is not the diverse form of the same word, because the speaker is a new word and it is called derivation. Coinage, another process, is generally not the part of any word formation, but it is consciously created by the speaker or the writer to point to their own culture and ethnic identity. It is also at times created by accident. Yet, cultural sensibility is involved to show their own identity or subjectivity. Many modern writers coin a new word by adding some linguistic features of native language. They do so because they believe that it is one of the ways to resist the dominant and hegemonic form of English language.

Code-mixing and Code-switching are seen as a new venture with political overtones. They are intended to introduce some features of the native language, or L1, into the dominant form of colonial language, L2. All contemporary writers of non-native world like

Arundhati Roy, Aravind Adiga and others have mixed some linguistic component of L1 into L2. R.K. Agnihotri (1997) registers that the phenomena of Code-mixing and Code-switching are helpful in subverting colonial form of English when the native speaker mixes one language code to the other language code, or the variety of language. In conversation, that is called Code-mixing. But when the native speaker switches from one language to another language during his conversation at lexis, phrasal, clause, sentential level, it is called code switching.

B. B. Kachru, in his *The Indianisation of English: The English Language in India* (1983), explains Code-mixing and Code-switching:

> *Code-switching* entails the ability to switch from code A to code B. The alteration of codes is determined by the function, the situation and the participants. It refers to categorization of one's verbal repertoire in terms of functions roles. ... *Code-mixing*, on the other hand, entails transferring linguistic units from one code into another (193-194).

Now, there is a brief analysis of the literary comments on the three selected novels. Power politics is chiefly expressed through intrigues, manipulations, cruelty, violence, anger, and protest. The discrimination and exploitation prevalent among the oppressed by oppressors are common threads in all these novels. The specific expression of anguish and anger also take the form of rage, wrath, hatred, and fierce struggle. This typical pattern of society has been represented by Julie Mullaney (2002) as "the matrix of private and public history" (69). Through the example of Sunil Sethi in *Outlook*, she points out that, "the themes of love, spite, betrayal, hatred and guilt run like a spider's web" (69). On narrative patterns, Urbashi Barat (2012) in R.K. Dhawan's edited *Arundhati Roy: The Novelist Extra Ordinary* seems to name it "not quite cyclical" in nature (90).

As expressed by Charles Robert Darwin in his theory of evolution with compelling evidence in *On the Origin of Species* (1859), survival is the basic ingredient in human nature; this covers all the three selected novels too. Rahel, Estha, Ammu, and Velutha in *The God of Small Things*, Balram in *The White Tiger*, and Yogesh A Murthy in *Last Man in Tower*, have to struggle a lot to improve their predicament. Alex Tickell explains Arundhati Roy's novel in these words:

> Roy's interest in the continuities between childhood and adulthood does, however, point to an important generic template in the *Bildungsroman* – a type of novel, usually narrated in the first person, in which the central character's growth from childhood to maturity and their developing self-awareness provide the main framework of the narrative (3).

Although not written in the first person narrative, the story-line in Roy's novel has many autobiographical touches. Furthermore, there are many parallel patterns in *The God of Small Things* irrespective of time and distance that they cover. Arundhati Roy has portrayed an old house as: "The History House. Whose doors were locked and windows open" (306). In the same way, T.S. Eliot in his *The Four Quartets* suggests that history is always 'a pattern of timeless moments'. (123) Time plays a significant role in such novels depicting continuity in exploitation through generations and muted or open protest against it.

Paradigm, as per Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, means first, a typical example or pattern of something. It also means a pattern in grammar, as a set of all the different forms of a word. Paradigm, therefore, relates to recurring pattern in power politics. Another definition of "paradigm" comes through Google online dictionary:

1. A typical example or pattern of something; a pattern or model. “society’s paradigm of the ‘ideal woman’” synonyms: model, pattern, example, standard, prototype, archetype; More a world view underlying the theories and methodology of a particular scientific subject. “the discovery of universal gravitation became the paradigm of successful science”.

2. Linguistics: a set of linguistic items that form mutually exclusive choices in particular syntactic roles.

3. (In the traditional grammar of Latin, Greek, and other inflected languages), a table of all the inflected forms of a particular verb, noun, or adjective, serving as a model for other words of the same conjugation or declension.

Thus, the use of paradigm in this study is meant to show repeating of exploitation-protest chain in the socio-historical context in the three selected novels.

Margaret Atwood has said, “I am a novelist. I don’t generalize.” Hence, in content and scope *The God of Small Things*, *The White Tiger*, and *Last Man in Tower*, have a common pattern of suffering and resistance. That resistance may, at times, be passive as in the case of Velutha. In the case of Masterji, the active resistance starts; but in the case of Balram, it is aggressively active resulting into murder. These differences in the three novels are justified because of difference in locale, situation, and the attitude of the characters involved. If their struggle is generalized, it would seem inauthentic and aesthetically implausible. As both Roy and Adiga are skilful artists, they have avoided such inanity of generalization.

Regarding presence of protest in novels, it is essential to quote Richard Wright, in the article of Kichung Kim (1974); “Wright, the Protest Novel, and Baldwin’s Faith”, where he has noted, “All

literature is protest. You can't name a single novel which is not protest". In Indian context, K. Jagannatha Rao and Murali Mohan Raju (2013) have noted:

> The voices of protest have expanded its horizon by cutting across the linguistic barriers and various movements like, Dalit movement... articulating a silent pain of 'a section of our people relegated to the bottom of the social hierarchy for more than thirty centuries and laid the foundation stone of protest in their native languages (262).

But the protest continues in some form and the other. Hence, such novels have been written and would be written again. The three novels, therefore, are part of a series of eternal creations. One is here reminded of Major Scobie that the heart of the matter is suffering. If one does not know it, he is either a child or a wicked person.

Mona Scheuermann (1985) in *Social Protest in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* deals with social protest but it was not taken as a vehicle of social reform in the eighteenth century. Scheuermann has examined nine eighteenth century novels ranging from Henry Fielding's *Amelia* to *Hermsprong: or Man as He is Not* of Robert Bage, where she has noted these novels as 'quite civilized affair'. It indicates that protest in novels those days were not violent and brutal. However, in her findings, the abuse of power has been a common theme in the eighteen-century novels of protest. The blurb has noted significantly:

> Belief in the power of education as a force for the improvement of society, colors the protest by suggesting that there is a relatively easy and likely very effective solution for much that is wrong. Irony, satire, and rational optimism intervene between

> the reader and the social pain being brought dramatically to his attention.

This shows very clearly that the chosen novels for the study, with the struggle of power politics, are extension of the earlier literary protests. As contemporary time has not been so civilized with the absence of less human values, so these selected novels by the present scholar are very brutal at times. Examples are the beastly beating of Velutha by Kerala police in Roy, murder of Mr. Ashok by Balram, and cold-blooded murder of Yogesh A Murthy in Adiga.

Satish K. Sharma (1987), in his edited book *Reform, Protest, and Social Transformation*, has chapters on protest and reform through the lenses of social angles in it. Sharma's insight in his chapter has depicted a clear evidence of the workers, which is also apparently true with pickle factory workers in *The God of Small Things* and drivers of *The White Tiger*. He, for his specific argument, underlines:

> For the workers, ... they are unable to do anything in the given working conditions since they themselves are powerless. Thus, the work process over a historical period of time sets in motion the augmentation of sense of powerlessness, helplessness etc. (245)

E. Raja Rao (1993) in *Beyond Protest*, examines contemporary African American Fiction critically, where he suggests:

> One is the protest tradition and the other can be called the "aesthetic tradition." The novels of protest are marked by a racial animus without any concern for stylistic novelty whereas those of the aesthetic tradition show great awareness of the complexities of the "human condition" depicted in an artistic style. (27)

His apt remarks about 'a strong current of protest tradition', have meticulously applied sense in the selected works of Roy and Adiga here. However, the protest tradition reached its high point with the publication of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. E. Raja Rao has, further, discussed with the help of Richard Right's "How Bigger was Born", as "white God" and "black God". It has an analogy to Roy's depiction of God of small and God of big things. Adiga's portrayal has also elements of the same expression, when he points out:

> To sum up – in the old days there were one thousand castes 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. (*TWT* 64)

For sociological approach to political and nonpolitical violence, Prabhash Pd. Singh (1989), in his *Political Violence in India*, has studied it during the period of 1977-80. For violence, Singh tries to understand it as: "The growth of science and technology has not been able to reduce violence but to provide more efficient and more reliable instrument of torture" (2). So, the ideology of power politics comes in between production of knowledge. Said has aptly said: "For there is such a thing as knowledge that is less, rather than more, partial than the individual, who produce it. Yet this knowledge is not therefore automatically nonpolitical" (10). These writings help in understanding the social problems depicted in the three selected novels, as why situation presented there is so bleak and barren.

Yet, in literary books, narrating the same political-economic situation is not simple but complex, because they deal with feelings generated out of those factual situations. Arundhati Roy writes English language in a global pattern of impression. Jason Cowley,

one of the five 1997 Booker Prize judges, indicates by commenting on Roy's work, "structurally ... interesting" and has a "radical difference" from other conventional novels. Complexity comes out in her work because the subject matter is very intensely related to her life. Ammu in the novel is largely modeled on Roy's mother. Some other references of the novel on Estha and Rahel are from her own life. So, though things are recreated, they still bear the stamp of lingering anguish.

Cowley has further noted Roy's "valuable insight" in techniques, tools, narration, and also in her well-arranged writings, which she has employed in *The God of Small Things*:

> ... a circuitous narrative so that events emerge elliptically and out of chronological sequence. She cannily uses cinematic techniques - time shifts, endless fast forwards and reversals, rapid editing - simultaneously to accelerate and delay the coming disaster. An atmosphere of foreboding, sometimes, lapsing into portentousness, hangs over the narrative. (*India Today*, Oct. 27, 1997)

Salman Rushdie and Elizabeth West (1997), have an edited anthology, *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing 1947-1997*. Rushdie, who himself has much anger and protest in his *Midnight's Children*, argues, "English has become an Indian language" (xiii) because now many creative writers from India or from Indian origin writing in English, are becoming internationally famous. There have been thirty-two extracts, starting with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru's the great freedom at midnight speech, *Tryst with Dest*iny, to Indian English novels in chronological orders. It includes, an extract, "Abhilash Talkies", from *The God of Small Things*, where Orangedrink Lemondrink Man coaxes Estha (544 & *TGST* 104) into physical abuse.

"Reading Arundhati Roy Politically" in an essay by Aijaz Ahmad (1997) where he has called her method a Marxist Approach to literature in relation to capitalism. Aijaz Ahmad argues that Arundhati Roy's novel, *The God of Small Things*, has touched many of the current themes of literature. Ahmad has also discussed why it is "the most polished novel we had in the language so far" (111). Ahmad further points out about the centrality of English language with 'naturalness' and the novel is 'actually felt in English' (118). He compares Roy with Rushdie's *Midnight Children*, in its sensibility, in its linguistic competence, and also its formal construction, which is possible only in English. Ahmad states:

> … Arundhati Roy is exceptional in the use of language and form as these have evolved so far in this literature, and she accurately and powerfully reflects the themes and ideologies that are currently dominant in the social fraction within which she seems to be herself located and which is in any case the primary readership for her fiction. (117)

Brinda Bose (1998) in her critical piece of writing, "In Desire and in Death: Eroticism as Politics in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*", has discussed the 'utopian' possibilities and eroticism as politics. This eroticism is an extension of Aijaz Ahmad's assumption (1997) in his above article. And, for death, Bose has argued that 'Ammu's death is in itself something of a daring political statement' (124). Brinda Bose keeps on arguing that Ammu's "inherent anger" (125) as "breathing anger" (*TGST* 176) is not her desire, but turn into a form of rebellion and, ironically dying at the 'viable die-able' (*TGST* 3, 92, 161, and 327) a tragic end in her thirty-one years of age. Bose names many researchers, who have identified the novel and the present study does the same, a sturdy protest.

Brinda Bose, however, finds abnormality in incest between Rahel and Estha. She seems to be wrong like many others in mistaking intense inseparability between them as physical relation. The twins have not indulged in such activities, but it has their primal bond, which is a matter of soul and not of body.

Power Politics as a subject has been exercised in various ways. The first has its roots in Political Science. Here, it is worth to discuss what impressions it has on Indian English Literature, on Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga. It suggests how power plays its role in the selected novels. Brinda Bose (1998) calls it the politics of desire in Roy's novel as:

> … to read her novel politically one may need to accept that there are certain kinds of politics that have more to do with interpersonal relations than grand revolutions, that the most personal dilemmas can also become public causes, that erotics can also be a politics. (10)

Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam (1999) have an edited book of two dozen critical essays written from various angles and typical theoretical positioning. P.K. Nayar reads *The God of Small Things* by using 'gaze' as concept and metaphor. While in another essay, J.M. Verghese uses freedom and sufferings as recurring theme in the novel, which is both local and universal. Christian reading of Suguna Ramanathan observes the novel through the window of darkness and sufferings. Ramanathan also presents her paper as the critique of power and textual references in a specifically Christian way. She explains: "Velutha's helplessness when caught in the structured coils of worldly power is crucial to its Christian ethos" (66).

In the same book, Urbashi Barat has discussed "great stories and small ones" prominently. Barat's key tool to justify the paper is

myth, for which, she concludes: “Myth reinforces the universality and the continuing relevance of the novel and extends the boundaries of specific moments in time and space” (81).

Indira Nityanandam justifies the novel through the linguistic disparities and uniqueness. Nityanandam’s essay is a linguistic survey that explains the literary presence in the novel. She has noted: “Roy has displayed a capacity for description-passages which are linguistically and aesthetically pleasing” (118). Nityanandam has well said that Arundhati Roy accomplished her work which has been recognised in both literary and linguistic aspects of contemporary period.

Makrand Paranjape (2000), in his monograph, *Towards a Poetics of the Indian English Novels*, has an Introductory and five chapters on various aspects of Indian English Novels. Paranjape has acutely noticed, *The God of Small Things*, as a “minor masterpiece” of familial, cultural, social, political, and technological “suffering and pain” (121), which he has registered as anger:

> The novel also takes a stand against all kinds of cruelty and intolerance—personal, social, cultural, political, or commercial. All these destroy the capacity of humans to love and affirm their faith in one another. (120)

In it, he has noticed, as “Roy, suggests, we have to oppose them, even if we have no chance to win” (121). This underlying feature of Roy’s thinking is a reminder of how she has portrayed the paradigm of power politics and its language in her “astounding book” (119), *The God of Small Things*.

Meenakshi Mukherjee (2000), in her perspective on Indian writing in English, *The Perishable Empire*, has given barely sufficient attention to Roy and Adiga. Roy’s novel has various

elements in it. In literary form we accept that there are various themes in the novel that are less Indian and more Western. Mukherjee argues that recent Indian novels have less Indianess in them. For Roy, this theory sounds insightful, but for Adiga's *The White Tiger* the above statement does not qualify. Adiga talks of the "New India" concept. Mukherjee shows the true face of the novels, as:

> The imperative to essentialize India through evocation of local colour or standard signifiers, is naturally less perceptible in the Indian-language novel where intricate tensions of community, religion, caste, language, region and class assume a greater immediacy and the question of Indianness is seldom addressed (201).

So, the new novelists want to sell their Indianness or identity, or even themselves. They at times simply choose Dalit literature writer or well-known non-Dalit writer.

Amitava Kumar (2000) in *Passport Photos* has verified protest in the context of *The God of Small Things*. Kumar has noticed the "brown leaf" (*TGST* 294) on Velutha's back. The leaf is a sign of his down to earth nature. But, along with it, this colour shows poverty and hurdle on his back. The Brown colour also symbolises warmth, care, reliability, wholesomeness, and security; to the twins, for Mammachi and Ammu; stone colour stands for stability and honesty. Kumar has argued: "Ammu, the upper-caste married woman, falls in love with this sign" (202). It has another connotation; Roy has in her own mind that green leaf has fallen to the ground and become dry, turning into brown. The brown leaf was prominently marked on the back of Velutha.

Politics is a power relation in various spheres of, and within, home as well as nation, between state and international platforms.

Hence, the birth of Geopolitics. The geopolitics, as a term, varies within the contexts of geographical and expression of politics. The geographical context consists of land, ethnicity, region, and east-west. Its political counterpart is critique of power, which has influence on, caste, *dalit*, gender, feminism, ethnicity, laws, history, literature, diaspora, or local, national/ international identity. Friedman (2001) stresses in this context:

> Roy's integration of gender and caste into the story of the nation – particularly as this story involves violence performed, tacitly sanctioned, or ignored by the state – demonstrates how feminist geopolitics engages locationally – that is to say spatially – with power relations as they operate both on the nation and within the nation. (117)

In *Power Politics* (2001), Arundhati Roy writes the moment of truth as, "Civilians starving to death while they're waiting to be killed." (113). In the same context of discussion, Aravind Adiga, has named such brutality, trapped in 'rooster coop'. Adiga's protagonist has his journey from 'rooster' to the tiger. Adiga uses roosted coop to point out a powerless person in the whirl, stuck in black politics or in the brutal political game, and hence "half-baked" in nature. As Aravind Adiga has aptly explained the half-baked situation:

> 'The Autography of a half-baked Indian.' That's what I ought to call my life'.
>
> Me, and thousands of others in this country like me, are half-baked, because we were never allowed to complete our schooling. Open our skulls, look in with a penlight, and you'll find an odd museum of ideas: ... sentences about politics read in newspapers... things that drop into your mind, like lizards from the ceiling, in the half-hour before falling asleep – all these ideas, half formed and half digested and half correct, mix

> up with other half-cooked ideas in your head, and I guess these half-formed ideas bugger one another, and make more half-formed ideas, and this is what you act on and live with. … Entrepreneurs are made from half-baked clay. (*TWT* 10-11)

The upbringing of the protagonist, Balram, is a story of how a half-baked individual is the product of his anger and he becomes a tycoon and powerful person, and finally, the "boss of Bangalore" (*TWT* 319) with all virtues and vices.

A. N. Dwivedi (2001) has a dozen critical essays in *Arundhati Roy's Fictional World*. In preface, Dwivedi says, "Arundhati Roy is unquestionably 'modernist' in her approach to language and style" (iv). In one of these essays, Sheobhushan Shukla has a well written piece of writing, in which he tries to locate the differences between the big and the small, for it he calls them macro and micro, as "philosophical implications" (114). Shukla has mentioned this novel as: "not just a novel, it is a fundamental mode of social inquiry also (*ibid*)". Further, he shows that the dichotomy between the big and the small is material centered in nature.

Rama Kundu (2001) has an essay titled, "Arundhati Roy: In the Light of Linguistics and Literary Criticism". In this paper, she has justified it through the dual lens of language and literature: "Roy exposes the ugliness of society by bringing two children to react, … children's pain serves as a powerful language of rejection of this system" (97).

It is also worthwhile to mention Michel Foucault (2002). In his phenomenal book *Power, Volume 3*, he analyses the power relationship within society. It is so much true in the case of *The God of Small Things*, where Ammu-Velutha story aptly describes their trapping in the love laws. On the other hand, the backdoor, libertine

relationship of Chacko with the factory women is a glaring example of hypocrisy. While Mammachi is against her daughter's dalliance, she herself helps Chacko to sleep with working women from her factory.

In *Last Man in Tower*, Yogesh A. Murthy, alias 'Masterji' is also trapped in Vishram Society. Foucault has aptly investigated similar situations: "Power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not a supplementary structure over and above 'society' whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of." (343)

In the case of *The White Tiger,* on the other hand, Balram becomes free individual, as freeness is one of the essential requirements of power relationship. Balram is the only man who breaks the Rooster Coop, who destroys it, so he has finally become the rare white tiger. In this account, Michel Foucault, in *Power Vol.3* (2002), has clearly distinguished Marxist interpretations and its oppressive use against the individuals or the groups. Foucault argues that power is not essentially something that institutions possess:

> When one defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the actions of others, when one characterizes these actions as the government of men by other men— in the broadest sense of the term— one includes an important element: freedom. Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are "free." (341-342)

> And again, Foucault remarks:

> By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several kinds of conduct, several ways of reacting and modes of behavior are available. Where the determining factors are exhaustive, there is no relationship of power: slavery is not a power relationship when

> a man is in chains, only when he has some possible mobility, even a chance of escape. Consequently, there is not a face-to-face confrontation of power and freedom as mutually exclusive facts but a much more complicated interplay. In this game, freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power… . (341-342)

Mary Hamer (2002), in her controversial book *Incest: A New Perspective* has a chapter on Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Hamer talks about the 'silence with trauma' and the mystery around Sophie Mol's drowning with 'hints of violence' with a silence (165). The silence is always the means of suppression from within. The suppression, at a psychological occurrence, may sometimes come up with a huge protest. This protest again may be from within or come out with a massive rage of an uncontrollable anger. Shuchi Srivastava (2014) re-recognises this anger as one of the five thieves. "The well described slow poisons are; attachments, anger, greed, desires and ego (*Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, *Moha* and *Ahankaar*)" (93). Hamer, further, investigates the loss and finds its roots in the past and practices through the present: "The violence is linked with the system of caste, the hierarchy that in enshrined at the heart of Indian life and for ten thousand years has regulated whom people may marry." (169) Apart from this, the author has blamed the twins for being in incest, which is wrong in normal nature.

Also, Mary Hamer has a new perspective on incest; she has applied it for establishing a link with the scandal of sexual abuses as drawn from the work of artists and filmmakers. But Hamer has forgotten that the film and literature are separate genres, with shades of differences.

Émilienne Baneth-Nouailhetas (2002) in the essay, "The Structure of Memory", has studied *The God of Small Things* critically

with sincerity and insight. Baneth-Nouailhetas argues that the narrative structure of *The God of Small Things* is based on the "combination of digression and anachrony" (*AT* 143), which indicates two directions of the past and the reminiscence. In this novel, memory plays an important role for delivering perfect message to its readers. It has tendency of creating inherent memory in the mind of the reader; it also elaborates how the text is progressing with dense intensity. In the novel, memory has a smell, like, "History's smell. Like old roses on a breeze." (*TGST* 55). As per Baneth-Nouailhetas, the preceding last line is a showcase for "image of violence and death" (147).

Writings of both, Roy and Adiga, fall under postcolonial sensibility. However, critics say that Post-colonialism is like a sinking ship in the present context. Robert J.C. Young (2003) in his *Postcolonialism: A Short Introduction* supports this idea:

> A lot of people don't like the term 'postcolonial' ... . It disturbs the order of the world. *It threatens privilege and power*. It refuses to acknowledge the superiority of western cultures. Its radical agenda is to demand equality and well-being for all human beings on this earth. (7, italics mine)

The words in the italics above are applicable to both Roy and Adiga because they write against the privilege and the power of the few in society, the previous obsolete feudal system.

P. Venugopalan (2003), in his interesting research paper," 'Muffled Voice': Velutha, the Subaltern, in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*", surveys Velutha's stifled voice, his silence, his quietness, his subaltern muteness, his social handicapped position in society as a worth mentioning for discussion. For handicapped,

Venugopalan reveals: “Velutha is socially handicapped, whereas Ammu’s dream figure is physically handicapped.” (69)

Laura Doyle and Laura A. Winkiel (2005) in their edited book, *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity*, have focused many aspects of Modernism as a global phenomenon. In the book, the term “geomodernisms” indicate how modernism has spread its wings globally. This is particularly relevant to a society, which is based on discrimination in relation to caste, wealth, and gender.

Susan Stanford Friedman (2005), in her another extensive article, “Paranoia, Pollution, and Sexuality: Affiliations between E.M. Foster’s *A Passage to India* and Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*”, tries to highlight parataxis of modernism in relation to geomodernism and power politics to geopolitics.

Debjani Ganguly (2005), in her different and a positive and optimistic scholarly book, *Caste, Colonialism and Counter-Modernity*, has studied a prevalent “socio-cultural” structure that is “peculiar to South Asia”, and that is rigid caste system. The caste is mode of functional weapon, so it divides power and the powerless. The present book investigates the limits of sociological and historical enquiry of the caste system with the help of “social scientists, political activists, and policy makers” (i), which is much helpful to justify and to continue the argument of this present study. By focusing on the literary traditions, Ganguly suggests that caste is not only responsible for Southern Asia’s backwardness, but it also pushes back negativity further. By refusing the pessimism the critic has become an optimist in her literary scholarship. Ganguly, further, studies Derrida’s notion, aporia, in special context of death of Velutha and Ammu with special context of Ranajit Guha’s essay, “Chandra's Death”, where, she has projected them by various parameters of literature.

Richard J. Lane (2006) attacks Indian caste system, patriarchal values, transgressing codes, and, of course, deconstruction of the dominance of English grammar. Lane's reading of *The God of Small Things*, as a postcolonial novel, comes with the topic "The Optical Unconscious". Lane reads novel closely, to engage the readers and start "the critical debates" (vi). *The God of Small Things*, he proclaims, "is to traverse an entire architecture space of writing that cannot be separated into binaries or hierarchies, inside or outside, western or indigenous, global, or local" (108).

Elleke Boehmer (2006), in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*, has traced the constructions and deconstructions in a range of text, especially by Arundhati Roy, on the question of identification; "duality is emblematized in the deeply intimate relationship of the two-egg twins" (254), gender, and the postcolonial language point of view.

Alex Tickell (2007), in his most striking and widely referred book, *Arundhati Roy's 'The God of Small Things'*, has touched most of the literary aspects and has also talked critically about Arundhati Roy's achievements regarding her structural and stylistic effects in her remarkable, debut novel. Tickell calls *The God of Small Things*, as "'magical', 'breathtakingly beautiful' and 'close to perfection'" (xii). He, further, clarifies how *The God of Small Things* as a novel "resists categorization and draws together elements of the fairy tale, psychological drama, pastoral lyric, tragedy and political fable." (3)

These are precisely the matters of discussion in the three select novels of this study, where characters are stuck in a typical political pattern. Alex Tickell (2007) has noted:

> To discuss the socio-political realities of contemporary India through power politics as found in the novel of Arundhati Roy

> are somehow more typical and protestant in the nature itself. Though the socio-political realities are enormous in this 'ground-breaking novel' (blurb of AT).

All the three novels are truly accessible and groundbreaking pieces of creative works, which make new discoveries, by using new methods of literary writing with innovative linguistic aspects.

Aïda Balvannandhan (2007), in her full length book, *Arundhati Roy's 'The God of Small Things': A Study in the Multiple Narratives*, has illustrated an acute position of women and conditions of untouchables in India, especially in an exotic locale, Kerala – "God's Own Country". Balvannandhan has touched almost every theme in the present book. She has no hesitance in saying Roy's first novel has, "a dense polyphonic world with several layers of narratives of which it is the humble aim of this book to trace but a few" (21). Adding to the ongoing discourse, Pashupati Jha (1997) too finds, "... layers of meanings"; and adds further: "Like any other great work of art, this novel has many dimensions and hence scope for multiple interpretations" (113). These properties of this novel indicate the complexity of paradigm of power politics in Roy's writings.

In the same vein of argument when Adiga writes letters to Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Primer, he unveils the global power of a general man. These powers are given to the white tiger, who also calls himself, "A Thinking Man" (*TWT* 3). "And an entrepreneur", he has special power to communicate with Jiabao. Hirsh Sawhney (2008) explains this event thus:

> After starting a successful business that provides transportation to call center workers in Bangalore, Balram writes a letter of confession to none other than the Premier of another Asian economic success story, China. (2)

The paradigm of power politics is too huge in nature to explain. On one hand, it provides every power to the capitalist or the persons who are 'haves'; on the other hand, it snatches nearly everything from the hands of the poor or 'have-nots'. Adiga reveals the same in the setting of his novel, *The White Tiger,* when he was interviewed by Hirsh Sawhney.

> The book deals with an India smack in the middle of "the boom," and it challenges a lot of comfortable assumptions about Indian democracy and economics. I want to challenge this idea that India is the world's greatest democracy. It may be so in an objective sense, but on the ground, the poor have such little power. (3)

Stuart Jeffries (2008) calls it 'Roars of Anger'. He, further, raises the question of exposing the country's dark side. Critics say it may be one of the reasons for Aravind Adiga to receive the Man Booker Prize. Likewise, Andrew Holgate has remarked on blurb the whole features, why India has such a voice full of pities related to this country.

Pramod K. Nayar (2008), in his famous book, *Postcolonial Literature*, while concentrates on nation – notion of political independence, has a concept of "postcolonial subalternization"—a "process captured and critiqued in many texts of the 1980s and after from Africa and Asia" (69). Nayar claims, there are "revolutionary struggles" for "social transformation of the native space". (70). For Arundhati Roy, "The Kathakali Man is the most beautiful of men" (*TGST* 230), "writing aboriginal", Nayar quotes, "there is an episode embodying such a commodification" (94).

Leonidas Donskis (2008), in his ably written book, *Power and Imagination: Studies in Politics and Literature*, finds that political

imagination is operative in literary plot, myth, narrative, and language. Donskis, further, discusses their appearance in social theory, political ideology, thoughts, and cultural paradigm. From Shakespeare's plays and sonnets to Orwell's fables, he conjoins his literary sensibility to his familiarity with power politics:

> Their political and moral lessons are crucial now when politics in the classical sense is almost annihilated by modern bureaucracy and its countless technical policies, when technocracy proudly assumes the role of democracy, and when brutal power politics, fanaticism, bigotry, and cowardice walk in the guise of the struggle for peace and human dignity playing a sinister role in the contemporary world. (xiii)

Amar Nath Prasad (2009), in his edited book, *Commonwealth Literature in English: Past & Present*, has talked about Arundhati Roy's 'structural pattern' and 'the architectonics' of *The God of Small Things* (135). Then he comes to tracing the use of architecture by her;

> Almost every page of the book is so beautifully written that a literary man begins to leap with joy to see some new expressions, which give a jerk and jolt to mind (123).

Prasad covers all the prominent issues and themes raised by Arundhati Roy, from 'realistic delineation of the plight of the women in society to truthful portrayal of untouchability. He, further, has not been hesitant to call Roy a 'devoted social reformer', who wants to highlight the cause of the untouchables and their difficulties to adjust in a cold and indifferent society, in the tough sphere of power politics.

In her book, *Postcolonial Literatures and Context* (2010), Julie Mullaney makes the case how postmodernism debunks the post in

'post-colonial'. This post-colonial further tries to depart post from the colonial tools. Here, question is not of hyphenate post-colonial, which has been used by political scientists, economists, and historians to analyse a particular moment of political independence. It is not unhyphenated postcolonial, which makes a sensible interpretation of literary and cultural studies. These hyphenated and unhyphenated usages of both postcolonial terms have been noted by many scholars earlier too. Mullaney remarks further:

> Organized resistances to land displacements which perpetuate inequalities within and between nations, offer some proof that such processes are the site of deep contestation and challenge. The brunt of such movement, if often borne by those on the frontline between development, globalization, and fragile ecologies – women, indigenous populations, and subaltern groups, as Arundhati Roy (2001), Gayatri Spivak (2002), and Vandana Shiva (2002) have shown (24).

Postcolonial writers have taken up the theme of power politics, emerging from a violent history, Laura Doyle, again, (2010) traces them in describing the responses of writers of such history. Doyle argues:

> Women writers from Woolf and Rhys to Michelle Cliff, ..., Arundhati Roy, and Phyllis Shand Allfrey employ innovative narrative techniques that create 'geomodernism': a modernism aware of real-world violence, responding to historical crisis through fragmented perspectives and looping temporalities (13).

P.D. Nimsarkar and Subha Mishra (2010) have analytical essays on Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*. Nimsarkar calls *The White Tiger*, "compelling, angry, and darkly humorous novel about a man's journey from Indian village life to entrepreneurial success" (17). This

issue is linked to various aspects of the novel; sinister politics, culture and poverty, conflict between good and evil, marginalized psyche, politics of bizzare representation, and many more. Nimsarkar's research paper opens many issues on language and literature. He believes that language is a medium of "power dominance" (93).

Lucy Hopkins (2011), in "'What Will Sophie Mol Think?': Thinking Critically about the Figure of the White Child in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*", explores the discourses of whiteness and childhood interconnected in the novel. It is to position the Indian children, Rahel and Estha, in the novel in inferior relation to the figure of the white child, Sophie Mol.

Sudhir K. Arora's (2011) book *Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger': A Freakish Booker*, has more than a dozen critical essays. Arora examines the novel from different perspectives as viewed through various interpreting lenses. Arora has touched many aspects of literature in his book. For language part, he finally finds, "Adiga who has shown mastery over language likes to use simple words with rich effect. ... Adiga...has scissors or tools that either prune or remove the unnecessary weeds." (186).

R.K. Dhawan (2011) has edited a book, *Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger': A Symposium of Critical Response*, containing two dozen research papers by scholars and with an introduction by Santwana Haldar. In her 'Introduction' to the book, Haldar praises Aravind Adiga for his

> lucid style, his keen observation of life around him and his intolerance of social evils – corruption, the growing difference between the rich and the poor and complacence of the educated

masses – attract the readers who are disturbed by the reading and are, sometimes, prompted to react (12).

Tanushree Singh has written an essay, "Class Structure in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*". After comparing both the writers, Singh opines: "Roy suggests that social realities are eternal and are part of human nature, Adiga appears to suggest that material success is attained only by breaking the social and even moral barriers" (120).

In the context of his own novel, *The Coexistence* (2011) Stephen Gill expresses:

> The novel argues that the older models of assimilation and homogenization should give way to multiculturalism. International groups encourage this model because it promotes peace. This model is easier to adopt for the nations where liberal democracies exist, including India and Canada. *The Coexistence* is about world peace, focusing on live and let live (8).

These ideas of Stephen Gill have relevance to diffuse the situation of social tension related to novels dealing with such tensions. It can be compared with the novels selected for this study. Olimpia Iacob justifies Gill. Deeply and "equally involved in 'social, 'political', 'religious' issues, writer Stephen Gill seems to be a genuine Messiah" (50).

Alex Clark (2011) in review of *Last Man in Tower* shows that the novel has huge forgiving feel than *The White Tiger*. Clark clarifies:

> Adiga's anger at the India he describes – cities in which rapid economic expansion comes at an impossible price for a vast

> swath of their inhabitants, and in which the slow fading of the caste system has not been accompanied by a rise in social egalitarianism – remains undimmed (3).

Her review is meaningful and gives a feeling of an anguished heart when it is a matter of living in society of the corrupt materialistic people, who have no feeling of being humane and brotherly.

Sara D. Schotland (2011) has a comparative study in "Breaking Out of the Rooster Coop: Violent Crime in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* and Richard Wright's *Native Son*". Schotland talks of the "Manichean duality of rich/master/powerful and poor/servant/ oppressed" (1). It is a fine essay to compare how an Indian mind and the American mind work in narrating almost a similar situation.

Amitabh Roy (2012) has published a monograph, *The God of Small Things: A Novel of Social Commitment*. Roy tries to examine *The God of Small Things* with various literary themes in different styles of socially committed novel for women, children, downtrodden, and environment.

Rashmi Sadana (2012), in *English Heart, Hindi Heartland: The Political Life of Literature in India*, examines stalwarts of the Indian English Literature of global and local fame, which includes; Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy, Aravind Adiga, and Amitav Ghosh "in the context of debates within India about the politics of language". Argument of the book opens deeply the layers of English in India which "serves to change political and literary alliances among classes and castes" (Inside cover page).

In view of Marxist criticism, which is relevant to select novels for this study also, Terry Eagleton (1976, rpt. 2012) in *Marxism and Literary Criticism*, argues, "The originality of Marxist Criticism, then, lies not in its historical approach to literature, but in its

revolutionary understanding of history itself" (3). In *The God of Small Things*, Abhilash Talkies (94), Cochin Harbour Terminus (295), and The History house (304) do not have much historical authentic details. But the revolutionary understanding of history is evident at many places in the novel. In *The White Tiger*, Aravind Adiga has chosen out a utopian village, Laxmangarh (*TWT*14), but instead of Rajasthan where it is still located and has historical importance, in the novel it is situated in Bihar where the socio-economic exploitation is much more in practice, even today.

Julie Mullaney (2002, 2012) has written a critical book, *Arundhati Roy's 'The God of Small Things'*. Speaking of Roy, now a political and controversial writer, Mullaney writes: Roy's novel "raises crucial questions regarding the political implications of witnessing and representing forms of power and domination…" as prevalent in rural Kerala (9). On the question of "politics of language", the critic argues by quoting two key commentators:

> In *The God of Small Things*, her "wrenching" of the English language from its colonial roots through a series of "collaged words, regional aphorisms and culturally eclipsed meanings", creating in the process what Taisha Abraham calls "her own 'Locusts Stand I'". It had led Aijaz Ahmad to conclude that "Roy is the first Indian writer in English where a marvellous stylistic resource becomes available for provincial, vernacular culture without any effect of exoticism or estrangement, and without the book reading as translation (202).

R.K. Dhawan (2012) has edited a book on Arundhati Roy with the title, *Arundhati Roy: The Novelist Extraordinary*. The book has an Introduction by himself and about four dozen essays written on Roy's *The God of Small Things*. The book is in the form of general comments on all themes and elements of power politics as depicted by

Roy: “That is her new interest in matter related to power, war and power politics” (17). The essay by Madhumalati Adhikari is quite remarkable. According to the critic, Arundhati Roy has “very intelligently camouflaged the game of power politics behind the pattern of visible unchanging society” (42). Further Adhikari finds:

> Arundhati Roy, through re-thinking and re-visiting, has objectified the concept of power. Patriarchal ideas, physical aggression, heroic conquests, intellectual dominations are not the issues of today, they only exist behind the curtain. The potency of the power-broker lies in the spheres of political and economic grandeur. The law of society still constructed on the principles of the past, today has many other manifestations and connotations. New dimensions are being added to it. Women have been empowered and the battle continues (48).

Similarly, N.P. Singh (2012) has called Arundhati Roy realistic for she has “portrayed the anger and hate of Baby Kochamma” (67), who has been lording over Ayemenem House, has to feel neglected after the arrival of Ammu and her children there. Jacob George C. appreciates Arundhati Roy’s “thematic and stylistic experimentations and innovations” (71), and so has the “potential of humour which can act as a vehicle of protest and assertion” (*ibid*.). Tapan Kumar Ghosh (2012) tries to find the answer of the question for tomorrow’s promise of “Tryst with History” in *The God of Small Things*. The answer comes with power (192). The critic finds the story of *The God of Small Things* as not “a story of Ayemenem alone. It is a tale of almost every Indian village immersed in darkness and nurtured by orthodox social codes and patriarchal values.” (*ibid*.) This is the greatness of the novel to raise something of local importance to universal significance.

O. P. Mathur (2012) has written an insightful essay titled, "Arundhati Roy's Paradoxical Celebration of Smallness". Mathur has tried to show that smallness is always wide-ranging and inherent characteristics of hugeness. It cannot be challenged in any circumstances. Mathur speaks of the primordial love between Ammu and Velutha as something elemental and ancient, thus bridging the "social distances between the higher and lower classes" (220). He further adds similar intensity of love in the context of twins of joint identities who "are other sensitive souls bound by their love" (*ibid*.). Pramod K. Nayar (2012), in the same edited book by Dhawan, attracts a strong attention and interest of researchers in the field of Posthumanism. Nayar places his emphasis on 'oversignification' and 'liminality' provided by Roy in *The God of Small Things*. For "Oversignification", he points out, "then is the perception of an Other world, a new metaphysic" (235). For liminality, he argues, "Most characters in *The God of Small Things* are liminal or marginal, free-floaters" (237).

Nishi Chawla (2012) in her essay, "Beyond Arundhati Roy's 'Heart of Darkness': A Bakhtinian Reading of *The God of Small Things*", justifies the novel through Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of 'carnivalesque'. She notes:

> The Marxist party politics, the sexual politics of love and marriage, and the racial politics of the brown Indian pitted against their white counterparts are all forms of interpenetrating forces of hegemonizing, repressing authorities whose power is deflated within the carnivalesque forces operating in the novel (348).

Thus, as per Chawla, Roy, with ferocious bitterness, challenges the authority and the traditional social hierarchy in her novel, which leads to birth of power politics in it.

In spite of the visible darkness in *The God of Small Things*, Roy has a concluding hopeful tomorrow at the end of the novel. As tomorrow heralds always ray of immense hope, the ongoing thesis would try to show further, in subsequent chapters, that the social disparities will provide both implicit and explicit suggestions.

D.K. Pabby (2012), in R.K. Dhawan edited book harshly criticises the 'world order' in the wake of an aftermath of class struggle in the light of war. Pabby has rightly quoted the words of Roy in that fearful war like possibilities:

> Our cities and forests, our fields and villages will burn for days. Rivers will turn to poison. The air will become fire. The wind will spread the flames. When everything there is to burn has burned and the fires die, smoke will rise and shut out the sun. The earth will be enveloped in darkness. There will be no day—only interminable night. ... What shall we drink? What shall we breathe? (Quoted at 398).

In the same edited book by Dhawan, C. Sathyamala (2012) talks about an exotic India, where "whitebrownwhite girl dies" (386) while "waiting to be recolonized" (387) in her excellent essay, "The Emperor's New Clothes: *The God of Small Things*".

On the whole, R.K. Dhawan finds Roy a novelist extraordinary (11) and her novel as a "complex" one with "diverse ways" (20) of interpretation.

Anup Beniwal (2012) in *India and the Narratives of Globalization: Issues and Expressions* raises almost the same issue of the impact of globalization on Indian society and city as found in Adiga's two novels selected for this study. His second book *Writing Beyond Domesticity: Contemporary Indian Women Fiction* (2015) is

relevant to the study of *The God of Small Things*, especially the situation of Mammachi and Ammu.

Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal (2013) has edited a thought-provoking book, *Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger*, containing half a dozen critical essays by leading critics like; Nandini Bhautoo-Dewnarain, and Ecaterina Patrascu. In his "Introduction" to the volume, Agarwal praises the novelist for his masterpiece with a great feel for literature 'standing on the shoulders of the giants'. (8) Agarwal talks about Adiga's network of intertextuality and the use of epistolary devices. Earlier, this epistolary method was started by Samuel Richardson in *Pamela*, or *Virtue Rewarded* (1740), during the beginning of the British novel. Agarwal argues that Adiga offers new epistolary approach to *The White Tiger* as "a narrative in the form of letters". He further stresses how Adiga in his celebrated novel 'reverses' the order of his protagonist by writing 'confessional letters' to the then Chinese Primer, Wen Jiabao. On the question of linguistic ability, Agarwal avers by saying:

> The voiceless subalterns voice their unheard, suppressed, and latent signs of discomfort through this medium of communication and thus unburden their souls from the pressure of neurotic repression (11).

Jorge Diego Sánchez (2013) compares *The White Tiger* with Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* in his paper, "A Fashionable India? Fossils and Re-Orientalisms in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* and Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire*". Sánchez has touched many aspects from film to literature and from journalism to literature.

Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal (2013) has another edited book *Locating the Periphery: Booker Prize and the Indian English Novel*.

There are two essays on *The God of Small Things*, which have discussed "small heroes in a big story" and "conflicting ideas" in it. In "Conflicting Ideas in *The God of Small Things*", Sandeep Guha Roy and Joydeep Banerjee have presented "the conflict between the worlds of the hypocritical and the real—causing sociocultural idiosyncrasies in the characters" (82) of small and big things. This book has also two essays dealing with Rooster Coop Theory in *The White Tiger*.

K.V. Surendran (2013) has a full length book named, *'The God of Small Things': A Saga of Lost Dreams*. Surendran has dealt with various literary topics in the book. He has discussed certain properties of *The God of Small Things*, by stating:

> It is also a protest novel which is radical and unconventional. … Also, an anti-establishment dimension can be attached to it if one wants to. Untouchability as a canker is dealt with in the novel at some depth. … Of course, the novel is remarkable for the linguistic innovations (Preface vii).

E. Dawson Varughese (2013), argues that it is Rushdie, who presented Indian literature to the world in its new form and technique. So title of his book is *Reading New India: Post-Millennial Indian Fiction in English*. Varughese has mentioned:

> Additionally, the Booker Prize winning novel, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, has also ramifications on the Indian writing and publishing scene in English, Roy's novel has shaped both the Indian domestic literary scene as well as the Indian diasporic and international literary scenes (13).

Rupa Viswanath (2014), in her well received book, *The Pariah Problem: Caste, Religion, and the Social in Modern India*, criticises "Pariah Problem" "from colony to post colony" in an effective way.

Vishwanath talks of the records in the Madras Presidency of the early 1890s. With this she tries to examine, "why and how the Pariah Problem emerged when it did, and what happened subsequently" (3). She has called it by many names; Dalits, untouchable castes, and descendants of unfree agricultural labourers. The agricultural labourers, as per Tamil in native discourse, are no less than slaves and they are Paraiyar, Pallar, and Chakkiliyar. In *The God of Small Things*, Roy has explained this discrimination of untouchability in these words:

> Velutha's father, Vellya Paapen, however, was an Old-World Paravan. He had seen the Crawling Backwards Days and his gratitude to Mammachi and her family for all that they had done for him was as wide and deep as a river in spate (*TGST* 76).

Thus, it shows how paradigm of power politics has deep-rooted stigma and agony attached to it.

Anand Teltumbde (2014) in his book, *The Persistence of Caste*, touches almost every field of ugly atrocity inflicted on untouchables and lower caste people since long. This book focuses on 2006 Khairlanji massacre, which has some resemblances with Velutha's death in *The God of Small Things*. In the praise of the above critic, Arundhati Roy writes:

> Anand Teltumbde's analysis of the public, ritualistic massacre of a dalit family in 21st century India exposes the gangrenous heart of our society. It contextualizes the massacre and describes the manner in which the social, political and state machinery, the police, the mass media and the judiciary all collude to first create the climate for such bestiality, and then cover it up. This is not a book about the last days of relict feudalism, but a book about what modernity means in India. It

discusses one of the most important issues in contemporary India. (Inside cover page)

Binod Mishra (2014) in his research essay, "Cyber Space: A Site of Struggle and Release", has discussed that ground fact of the technological revolution: it "perpetuates the complex process of power politics, hegemony, and class struggle, as propounded by Habermas" (21). Further, on the question of power politics, Mishra concludes, "*Last Man in Tower* delineates the uncanny fact about the nature and function of power politics and the construction of an order or a structure" (26). Mishra has cited Foucauldian discourse of "Panopticism", as more effective surveillance.

Monir A. Choudhury (2014), in "Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* as a Re-inscription of Modern India", has explained the sufferings of the poor as an outcome of the socio-economic struggles and challenges. The lone old man, Murthy, is the victim of mindless growth and development in metros, in *Last Man in Tower*. Choudhary says: "Masterji's resistance to accept the offer of the builder shows how the middle class Indians, despite having troubles in their living in the old houses, are reluctant to accept modernization" (159).

Susan Stanford Friedman (2015) in her critical book, *Planetary Modernisms: Provocations on Modernity across Time*, enlarges the scale of space and time to argue for a fully planetary approach to modernity. On the question of modernism and geopolitical argument, Friedman points out:

> The category of modernity—and sometimes modernism—has considerable discursive currency in many parts of the non-West—it's variously debated, characterized, internalized, resisted, adapted, transformed, deployed, and so forth. In short, it's alive as an issue and a rhetoric outside the West; it's

> entangled with geopolitical, economic, and cultural questions of value and power. (317)

The statement above is relevant to *The God of Small Things* on a large scale and *The White Tiger* and *Last Man in Tower* on a lesser scale.

Samuel Missal (2015) has written a monograph titled, *Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger': A Study in Systemic Marginality*. Missal wants to show how marginality as a term touches the social, economic, political, and even spatial aspects of society in *The White Tiger*. He has depicted Adiga as a creative writer who has clearly visualized the sharp division between the rich and the poor. The poor becomes the subject of marginality, and rich are at the centre enjoying all the benefits of power politics. In Missal's own words: "It is a relationship of power where the rich exercise absolute power over the poor. Such a hegemony is the characteristic of systemic marginality" (2).

Sudhir K. Arora (2015) in his article, "Indian Novel in English: A Tour", once again articulates the journey of Indian English Literature through many upheavals. Arora looks forward with a new ray hope for the great Indian tradition of writings:

> The future of Indian Novel in English is bright and river will continue to make various lands fertile to the extent that the Indian contemporary landscape will attract the attention of readers all over the world (38).

In the article, he tries to spark a discussion starting from the first Indian novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864) to the novelist to be, Chetan Bhagat's *Half Girlfriend* (2014). Arora notes of Aravind Adiga as: "an able craftsman in his treatment of language, symbols and allusions in *The White Tiger* (2008)" (36).

Dipanjoy Mukherjee (2015), in "Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*: A Postcolonial Reading of New India", has tried to deal with various aspects like; colonialism, globalization, neocolonialism and other related paradigms. With the advent of materialism, Masterji has faced many problems, even threatened to his own life. Mukherjee concludes, "Adiga's fiction delineates a comprehensive panorama of the changing socio-cultural, economic and political paradigms and how these transform human lives in India" (60). It shows the impact of brutal power politics.

S. Monika (2015) has a small but intense study in *Contemporary Social Issues in Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger' and 'Last Man in Tower'*. Monika has discussed *The White Tiger*, an "unusual journey" of Balram Halwai as the major theme in the novel. She has also highlighted Balram's brave but dark story of escaping from the Rooster Coop. Monika observes: "...of protest, anger, disgust and sense of compassion so typical of those who have suffered a marginalised, muted existence and are longing to gain their voice and place under the sun" (56). She has mentioned, regarding the *Last Man in Tower*, that Adiga has delved deeper into the realities of urban life. Monika argues:

> Adiga paints a picture of the real estate jungle where ambition, money are predators seeking to dig their fangs into the soft flash of sentiments and grow stronger and stronger in time. The strong battle that rages between heart rending sentiments and apathy of ambition is the unique selling point of the literary piece. (57)

Archana Bhattacharjee (2016) has a book titled, *Reflection of Social Ethos in the Selected Novels of Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, and Aravind Adiga*. Bhattacharjee explores the treatment of social ethos as seen through Roy and Adiga's novels. She has tried to find

out the answer to the question of literature, language, culture, and society through the reflection of social ethos traced in the study. Bhattacharjee concludes on Roy; "*The God of Small Things* echoes with Indian social ethos. Roy as a socially committed novelist has done full justice to it." (164).

Joshil K. Abraham and Judith Misrahi-Barak (2016) together have an edited book, *Dalit Literatures in India*. There are three essays on Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* too. Essays in this book are from famous critics like; G.N. Devy, Jasbir Jain, Pramod K. Nayar, M.M.S. Pandian, K. Satyanarayana, Martine van Woerkens, Alexandra de Heering, Raj Kumar, Raj Kumar Hans, Carolyn Hibbs, Sipra Mikherjee, and so on. Ravi Shankar Kumar in his "The Politics of Dalit Literature", says: "The relationship between literature and politics has been a leitmotif in much of the discourse surrounding Dalit literature" (39). He speaks of the caste, untouchability, and politics. Kumar has clarified:

> The everydayness of caste, untouchability is essential for the caste system to reproduce itself. Hence, Dalit literature resists those patterns and tendencies which represent caste in public sphere as if caste was merely a remnant of the past. These tendencies camouflage the political nature of caste" (55).

An extensive study on Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* has been carried out by Sudhir K. Arora (2016). He describes themes of the novel in multiplicity, which entails considerably as poverty, struggle, identity, light versus darkness, mockery of religion, how to break the cage, failure of democracy, sex on sale, effects of globalization, master-servant relationship, servant-servant relationship, personal relationship, employer-employee relationship and so on.

K. Satchidanandan (2016) has an edited book, *Words Matter: Writing against Silence*, consisting of essays on speaking against silence. Gopal Guru (2016), in this volume has a thought-provoking essay, "Dalit History is Not Past but Present", shows how intolerance, as a question of social prejudice ranges from displacement of a large number of Pandits from Kashmir Valley to Dadri village tragedy. This burden of stigma remains attached to Dalits across time and space. The social tragedy in both, the context and out of the context, has meaningful impression on Indian English Literature. He further calls it as 'social intolerance' (146). In relation to the Dalit situation in India, he says, it "is analogous to the situation of Blacks who, as a leading light of Black literature Toni Morrison has observed, also do not grow in the eyes of white American males" (146). In the question of language, Guru postulates that the words always shrink in this natural process of 'photosynthesis'. He surprisingly encores, "Dalit life itself becomes synonymous with playing a reductive language game, and caste or social reality becomes synonymous with linguistic reality" (149). These elements and arguments have direct relevance to the three selected novels.

M. Sreelatha (2016), in "Resistance to Contemporary Realities in Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*", remarks, how "Adiga makes an attempt to bring the silenced individual to the centre." She attempts here how a common man resists the realities of fellow beings. In her words: "Adiga explores the loopholes in administration, disastrous vices, evil of corruption and bribery similar to his first novel. The narrative is built on the themes of power and resistance behind the lopsided development" (8). It shows the inhuman role played by power in the contemporary world.

Ulka Anjaria (2017), a scholar in analysing Twentieth-Century Indian Novels, in her recent paper, "Notes on the Indian Contemporary", looks through an alternative lens than that of postcoloniality. Anjaria writes in a survey of Roy's first novel:

> Sex, love, violence, and motherhood are all presented through the optics of everyday life rather than the gravitas of postcolonial fiction, in which sex, when represented at all, is often portrayed as a transgressive act with dire consequences (57).

Postcolonial is almost at the last leg of life, fading to gradual death. Writers and critics have to think of another term, which can really be felt across the contemporary literature. Anjaria advocates strongly applying some of the 'theoretical paradigms':

> … which are secularist, politically progressive, anti-capitalist, diasporic, modernist, skeptical of the nation, and committed to the idea that language is the space for either the consolidation or the subversion of epistemic authority (58).

Anjaria condemns and blames the postcolonial critics, who fail to understand the contemporary literature. She, further, advocates of "workings of power must be exposed in literature" (61). Her remarks are elaborated at length by the scholar in this thesis.

Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam (2017), in her essay, "Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*: Survival Strategies in a Morally Ambivalent India", has analysed the survival strategies adopted by ordinary men and women in the novel. Valiyamattam has also noted Masterji's protest against injustice: "the clarity of Masterji's vision pierces the darkness. Masterji's idealistic fight is unsuccessful, as expected, but it is meaningful" (7). The beauty of this novel is

raising Masterji's status to tragic dimension despite his apparent failure.

Manav Ratti (2018) in his research paper, "Justice, Subalternism, and Literary Justice: Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*", analyses the novel from another angle of justice: philosophical, legal, and literary. Ratti questions: "What is justice when its agent is subaltern — disprivileged by both caste and class — and delivers justice to himself?"; and "How can a writer conceive of and represent justice — literary justice — by working within and against philosophical and legal conceptions of justice?" He, in this essay, shows wider insight into the representation of class, caste, poverty, and violence that can be similar to the "structuring and translation of justice" (1).

Manglesh Dabral (2019), who has recently translated Arundhati Roy's second novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) into Hindi, says: "Roy's narrative is poetic, her characters have their own languages. There are many new words in the book that were very difficult to translate," This connotation is also true for *The God of Small Things*.

Now, it is relevant here to review the language aspect of the novels selected in view of what others have to say in this context. The thesis also speaks of the linkage between power politics and its expression in apt language. Some theoretical aspect about the use of language, thus, is in order here.

David Lodge (1979, rpt. 1994) argues, in his *Language of Fiction*, language in the art of novel is more popular in its approach to people than another communicative form of language. Lodge supports his comment by quoting Ian Watt; "the function of language

is much more largely referential in the novel than in other literary forms" (26).

Famous American novelist, John Updike (1997), in his popular essay, "Mother Tongue: Subduing the Language of the Colonizer", identifies *The God of Small Things* as global and local in its allusions and implications. Updike has unveiled the game of power politics, by saying: "a chord in stratified, unevenly developed societies that feel a shame and defeat in their history". Arundhati Roy has handled language in an unconventional way across the novel by her complex story-telling mode. First, it becomes the voice of her own, then of Ayemenem, again of small things in real life becoming quite significant; and finally fits into a kind of language that can be creatively understood throughout the globe. Her language has satisfactorily worked from North East to Kerala, from child to an adult person, common man to comrade, poor to rich, untouchable to touchable, haves to have-nots, and even depicts an ancient India. This type of comprehensive technique is what makes *The God of Small Things* great. *The God of Small Things* hopes for, "'*Naaley'*. Tomorrow." (340). Despite pervasive gloom, the last words of the novel quoted above point to possible hope for a better future. All great works of art are expected to be finally life-affirming. John Updike is appreciative of Roy's creation of her own language that can be used aptly in the intense, agonising situations: "A novel of real ambition must invent its own language, and this one does..." (blurb of *The God of Small Things*).

Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien (2004), in her *Weird English*, examines the syntactic and grammatical breakthrough of few writers, which includes Arundhati Roy in chapter, "The Politics of Design: Arundhati Roy". Nien-Ming Ch'ien "looks at how the collision of other languages with English invigorated and propelled the evolution

of language in the twentieth century and beyond" (from the blurb on the front flip). She displays how Roy, psychologically, tackles the language used in the novel "with political intent and, at times, anger":

> By positioning the children at odds with English, Roy demonstrates how—most transparently in postcolonial countries like India—the act of learning a language can be psychologically problematic pursuit. She shows how the production of language is the production of a psychology that is disseminated through a community. But this psychology is not stable, because language is flexible (like human beings). (178)

On the question of Roy's language, Padmini Mongia (2007), in her essay, "The Making and Marketing of Arundhati Roy", has represented the recognition and honour of Indian English by the literary style adopted by Roy. Mongia quotes Bill Buford (1997) regarding Roy's style: "... a kind of English is finding its voice, distinctly Indian English, one that is at once local and international, of its culture and of the globe" (107).

Anna Clarke (2007) talks of the language hybridity. Clarke also discusses the twins, which is an example of "biological hybridization". Language is a process of time and space. Languages have a quality of acceptance, which lead to a new development in the language. Shreesh Chaudhary (2017) argues that Indian English has its own syntactical properties and global recognition. This idea is also acceptable to Braj Bihari Kachru's conceived idea of three concentric circles of the language. Indian English language is found near to the Inner Circle of UK and US Englishes. Here, Anna Clarke herself has opposed the conformity of the "unsettling hybridity", which has been seen

> ...in the novel from the fact that all the central instances of hybridization, where characters try to breach the establshed hierarchies (of colonizer and colonized, touchable and untouchable, grammatical order and disorder) and 'entertain the difference' of hybridity are punished, criticized, or controlled within the narrative (139).

Urmila Hooda (2011) in Jagdish Batra's edited book, *Form and Style in Indian English Fiction*, tries to show how English language becomes native in *The God of Small Things*. Hooda has clearly established two facts:

> First, English was a foreign language and within an incredibly small span the writers like, Arundhati Roy, have contributed a lot in simplifying it and making it 'native' by blending it with typical Indian spices; and secondly, the method Roy adopts to achieve aim is by jotting down a story with all the typical ancient tradition of story-telling (83).

Jagdish Batra (2011), in his edited book, *Form and Style in Indian English Fiction*, suggests a close reading of the text, *The God of Small Things*. Roy has also taken many liberties with the syntax of the English language. There are ample examples in it, which will be discussed in the next chapter of this thesis. Batra has noted: "Deft use of stylistic and narratological choices have come from writers—like ... Arundhati Roy for her neo-nativization of English" (30). He finally concludes: "The several meeting points between thematic and the stylistics / narratological aspects of a literary text support the postmodern scepticism of distinctions" (31). The above book offers many insightful essays, which fills the vacuum in stylistic and narratological studies of various modern Indian novelists.

Rama Kant Agnihotri and Rajendra Singh (2012), have edited a book, *Indian English: Towards a New Paradigm*. Agnihotri et al. argue:

> ...that an account of IE cannot be provided without looking at the sociolinguistics of English in India and the political Economy of the contemporary world and India's place in it" (2).

There are research papers which are also useful in making arguments for the ongoing project of paradigm of power politics and its language in literary focused study. It will be discussed in subsequent chapters of the thesis.

George Orwell (1946, rpt. 2013), in his widely considered crispy small book on style, *Politics and the English Language*, shows the conditions for decline of language. Orwell clearly stresses that "the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes: it is not due simply to the bad influences of this or that individual writer" (1). He, further, advocates language must be a process of natural growth and must not be used for the purpose of its own. Orwell emphasises that language must not die of politics, but have quality of genuine feelings. As he points out:

> The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish spurting out ink. In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics' (15).

Rajesh K. Lidiya (2014) also talks of different languages suitable for different genres. Even different situations demand different tonal language. (282).

Shreesh Chaudhary (2017), in his essay, "East India Company, *Baboos*, and the rise of Indian English", suggests that with the passage of time, English language has developed into a standard form, which resulted in "English-knowing Indians for its offices, thus, became the catalyst for the growth of English in India." (51) Chaudhary proves that English as a non-native language has turned into an official language in India, which is also evident from the fact that Indian origin writers have won Nobel Prizes, Booker Prizes, and Pulitzer Prizes.

Not only the critics mentioned above but also the selected writers are fully conscious of the problems and possibilities of using English for creative purpose in India. From the opening page of the novel, *The White Tiger*, Adiga makes it clear that English language is not our own mother tongue. This language is the 'alien' language to Indian people as well as the Chinese ones, in general. In particular, there are certain things, which can be said only in English because they are far away from Indian thought, culture, and behaviour. English is a language of the colonizer and, of course, the link-language of the world. While addressing the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, he portrays the language policy very prominently: "Neither you nor I can speak English, but there are some things that can be said only in English" (*TWT* 3).

Arundhati Roy, on the other hand, depicts the language politics through the language of small twins in her novel, *The God of Small Things*. The dilemma of English and Malayalam writer, irrespective of their languages, is depicted through the conversation of Rahel and Velutha:

> 'See, you're smiling!' Rahel said. 'That means it was you.
>
> Smiling means, "It was you." '

> ‘That’s only in English!’ Velutha said. ‘In Malayalam my teacher always said, “Smiling means it wasn’t me.” ’ (*TGST* 177-78).

The ongoing discussion is for the expression of power politics in proper language to highlight the situation in *The God of Small Things*, *The White Tiger*, and *Last Man in Tower*. It is pertinent to quote Robert Phillipson (1992): “As in India, it is only bilingualism or multilingualism of the elite kind” (79). So, this expression of power politics becomes a complex phenomenon. This complexity is evident in the selected novels of Roy and Adiga. Robert Phillipson (2009) suggests structural and ideological dimensions for two language paradigms; one is monolingualism and ‘linguistic genocide’, while other behaves in the multilinguialism and linguistic diversity. Roy in *The God of Small Things*, uses Malayalam at many places; so does Adiga by using Hindustani (21).

There seems to be the recurrent patterns of power politics and their embedded expression in suitable language. Roy is a better artist for better assimilation of theme into language. Adiga, though a prominent novelist, is no match when compared to Arundhati Roy. Roy is a social thinker of equal distinction, but her social activism comes more prominently in her later writings. In *The God of Small Things* this aspect of social activism is totally absorbed in her art and is never overt. Adiga, on the other hand, is unable to repeat the feat of Arundhati Roy because he does not mold his language to the extent as done by Roy in her first novel.

There are four more chapters in the thesis. After this introductory chapter, the next chapter examines the paradigm of power politics and language in *The God of Small Things*. In this novel, power politics is played both within the Syrian Christian family and outside it in the Kerala socio-political situation. This

novel has intensity of a tragedy because of the poignant death of Velutha and the lonely death of Ammu. The language in the novel is highly experimental to match the power politics of the theme. The third chapter extends the link between power politics and language in Adiga's *The White Tiger*, with the difference that Balram, the protagonist of the novel, is not as powerless as Ammu and Velutha. Balram does not leave himself to fate but fights back, even if he has to kill his master Ashok. The fourth chapter presents the lonely relentless struggle of Masterji with the formidable Dharmen Shah, the mighty builder of Mumbai. Masterji, in many ways, is a study in contrast if one takes the character of Balram. While Balram is pragmatic, Masterji is a thorough idealist, who lives on the basis of his beliefs. Unlike Balram, he is a tragic figure, who lives with his ideals and dies for his ideals. This novel is the depiction of a colossal fight between a common man like Masterji and the corporate giant Shah. The last chapter concludes the study that how power politics governs socio-political life in India and how a suitable language is needed after the modification of the conventional one. The analysis is largely textual, supported by few thinkers and critics already mentioned in this chapter. Only three novels are selected for study to keep the focus of this study intact; addition of other novels might have diffused that focus.

Chapter 2

Paradigm of Power Politics and its Matching Language in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

"There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard." — Arundhati Roy

When *The God of Small Things* was published in 1997 as the first novel of Arundhati Roy, it created a sensation of high order. The debut work was awarded Man Booker Prize in the same year. After the novel became public by thousands of people reading the same, both the matter and the manner of the expression were appreciated by critic after critic. It is really a classic, probably the best novel written in Indian English literature. "I will write a book because I have a book to write, not otherwise", boldly asserts Arundhati Roy (1997). She has shown to the world that even a volatile personal matter related to her mother's desertion and Ammu's subsequent forbidden love with young Velutha resulting into brutal killing of the latter and lonely death of the former can be written in highly controlled language. The novel has layers of meaning embedded in its structure. But each meaning somehow is related to power struggle either in the family of Ammu or in the outside society and politics of Kerala.

Although power politics in *The God of Small Things* is mainly prominent, it comes into open first when Ammu, deserting her drunkard husband, comes to her parent's house with her two children. It is already operative in the earlier generation of Pappachi-Mammachi – the parents of Ammu. Shri Benaan John Ipe or Pappachi, a scientist in the central government at Delhi, had

discovered an insect, in which the credit is snatched away from him by his boss. This is a common game of power politics in Indian offices and institutes. As a fall-out of this frustration, he transfers his anger on Mammachi, his hapless wife, who is an accomplished violinist. In Vienna, Mammachi receives her first lessons on the violin. The lessons had to be stopped, "when Mammachi's teacher Launsky-Tieffenthal made the mistake of telling Pappachi that his wife was exceptionally talented" (50).

Pappachi has "an elongated dimple on his chin which only served to underline the threat of a lurking manic violence. A sort of contained cruelty" (51). He tortures her after office hours in several ways to calm down his injured male ego. It is the way to transfer his anger gathered at his office on to his wife at home; that too on regular basis. Mammachi, a docile wife in the beginning, bears it all till his retirement, when the family comes to their native place of Ayemenem situated in Kottayam district of Kerala.

> Pappachi, for his part, was having trouble coping with the ignominy of retirement. He was seventeen years older than Mammachi, and realized with a shock that he was an old man when his wife was still in her prime (47).

Once Pappachi smashed the bow of Mammachi's "gleaming" violin (166) into pieces and throws "it in the river" (48). Violin was Mammachi's lifeline, the only means of getting some respite from her hell of a conjugal life. Her daily beating by her husband "with a brass flower vase" (*ibid*) was not only brutal and humiliating but also much uncivilized if one takes into account his educational qualification and high status in the Imperial British India. He wants to lord over her as a sure sign of male power. If Pappachi's anger was not satisfied with humiliating Mammachi, it used to spill over other persons and objects.

> On one such night, Ammu, aged nine, hiding with her mother in the hedge, watched Pappachi's natty silhouette in the lit windows as he flitted from room to room. Not content with having beaten his wife and daughter (Chacko was away at school), he tore down curtains, kicked furniture and smashed a table lamp. An hour after the lights went out, disdaining Mammachi's frightened pleading, little Ammu crept back into the house through a ventilator to rescue her new gumboots that she loved more than anything else. She put them in a paper bag and crept back into the drawing room when the lights were suddenly switched on (181).

Such creation of panic and fear in the family by Pappachi, that also almost on regular basis, was basically the offshoot of power game that he had lost in his office, and wanted to make-up that loss by arrogant display of male power in the family. Precisely, in the words of R.P. Singh (2018): "It is a conscious struggle for resisting the false standards of male dominated society. It questions various institutions of society, the artifacts of cultures, and presents an authentic stand point towards casting a re-look on the socio-cultural trajectories of life" (210).

But Mammachi has her revenge when the family settles down in Kerala and the family has to carry on with seemingly high standard of living. She starts her factory, 'Paradise Pickles & Preserves' by using her culinary, business, and managerial skills, to the great resentment of her husband:

> Pappachi would not help her with the pickle-making because he did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official. He had always been a jealous man, so he greatly resented the attention his wife was suddenly getting. He slouched about the compound in his

> immaculately tailored suits, weaving sullen circles around mounds of red chilies and freshly powdered yellow turmeric, watching Mammachi supervise the buying, the weighing, the salting and drying, of limes and tender mangoes. Every night he beat her with a brass flower vase. The beatings weren't new. What was new was only the frequency with which they took place (47).

Pappachi thus looks educated on paper; but instead of being liberal he was a male chauvinistic pig, all the time conscious of his status as a male and, therefore, the principal player in the family. He, therefore, always asserted his right thoroughly till Chacko came in the picture.

Mammachi even gives engagement to her 'good for nothing' son Chacko, who is England returned but a pampered child. The ordeal of Mammachi does not end with earning. Pappachi has injured ego that why his wife should be treated with much more respect than he gets now.

In short, Soshamma or Mammachi now wears the pants that Pappachi can never tolerate. Pappachi, therefore, tries several means to humiliate her. Paradoxically, though Mammachi is so much harassed by a male, she is blind in love for her son and supplied him girls from her factory. Chacko is living separately from his British wife. For Mammachi, it is "Man's Needs" (168) to have sexual satisfaction:

> Mammachi had a separate entrance built for Chacko's room, which was at the eastern end of the house, so that the objects of his "Needs" wouldn't have to go traipsing *through* the house. She secretly slipped them money to keep them happy. They took it because they needed it. They had young children

> and old parents. Or husbands who spent all their earnings in toddy bars. The arrangement suited Mammachi, because in her mind, a fee *clarified* things. Disjuncted sex from love. Needs from Feelings (169).

Mammachi was partial to her son while she was very rigid with her daughter, when she fell for Velutha. This is all for power game that she unwittingly is playing—for her power she needs a male, Chacko, while a female, Ammu, is after all a married woman; and hence, an outsider. This contradiction in sexual and behavioural pattern has been highlighted further by Pumla Dineo Gqola (2004; quoted by Alex Tickell (2007)):

> In Gqola's view, caste regulation operates hand in hand with other forms of oppression such as patriarchy in *TGST*, allowing Chacko to satisfy his 'Men's Needs' with lower-caste women, but punishing Ammu for a similar cross-caste affair. Gqola argues that Roy thus reveals how caste distinctions are maintained through the regulation and policing of female sexuality, and also how caste, class and patriarchy combine in the fatal 'official' response to Ammu and Velutha's liaison (87).

Baby Kochamma, so prude in her sexual morality, supported Mammachi's supply of girls to Chacko, though she was also bitterly against Ammu's love for Velutha. The entire novel, in fact, has a sub-theme of hypocrisy as prevalent in the so called high class society of Kerala. To quote from the text of the novel:

> Surprisingly, Baby Kochamma accepted this explanation, and the enigmatic, secretly thrilling notion of Men's Needs gained implicit sanction in the Ayemenem House. Neither Mammachi nor Baby Kochamma saw any contradiction between Chacko's

> Marxist mind and feudal libido. They only worried about the Naxalites, who had been known to force men from Good Families to marry servant girls whom they had made pregnant. Of course they did not even remotely suspect that the missile, when it was fired, the one that would annihilate the family's Good Name forever, would come from a completely unexpected quarter (168).

Margaret Kochamma, the estranged wife of Chacko, however, was a different kettle of fish altogether. When she came on a short visit to India, she had no means of finding out the truth, though she did once try to get Kochu Maria to examine the bed sheets for stains. Mammachi could only hope that Margaret Kochamma was not intending to resume her sexual relationship with Chacko. While Margaret Kochamma was in Ayemenem, Mammachi managed her unmanageable feelings by slipping money into the pockets of the dresses that Margaret Kochamma left in the laundry bin. Margaret Kochamma never returned the money simply because she never found it. Her pockets were emptied as a matter of routine by Aniyan, the washer man. Mammachi knew this, but preferred to construe Margaret Kochamma's silence as a tacit acceptance of payment for the favours Mammachi imagined she bestowed on her son.

> So Mammachi had the satisfaction of regarding Margaret Kochamma as just another whore, Aniyan the dhobi was happy with his daily gratuity, and of course Margaret Kochamma remained blissfully unaware of the whole arrangement (169).

Thus, though not overt, there is power politics played between Mammachi and Margaret Kochamma. Mammachi regards her as a low British woman unsuitable for becoming her daughter-in-law. Mammachi has soft feeling for her granddaughter, Sophie

Mol, but she never exhibits any soft corner for Margret. This also indicates Mammachi's incipient fear that Margaret may not win her son back to England. It is to be noted here that Chacko has saved her once from the beating of Pappachi, threatening him not to ever repeat that brutality in future. Arundhati Roy depicts:

> … Chacko came home for a summer vacation from Oxford. He had grown to be a big man, and was, in those days, strong from rowing for Balliol. A week after he arrived he found Pappachi beating Mammachi in the study. Chacko strode into the room, caught Pappachi's vase-hand and twisted it around his back.
>
> "I never want this to happen again," he told his father. "Ever."
>
> For the rest of that day Pappachi sat in the verandah and stared stonily out at the ornamental garden, ignoring the plates of food that Kochu Maria brought him. Late at night he went into his study and brought out his favorite mahogany rocking chair. He put it down in the middle of the driveway and smashed it into little bits with a plumber's monkey wrench. He left it there in the moonlight, a heap of varnished wicker and splintered wood. *He never touched Mammachi again. But he never spoke to her either as long as he lived.* (48) (Italics added)

Mammachi's experience of domestic violence at the hands of her husband and Pappachi's male ego taking revenge is explained by Julie Mullaney (2002) as:

> … a set of concerns more fully delineated in *The God of Small Things*, primarily focusing on the ways in which Indian women are and have been, historically, situated at the nexus

> of a variety of intersecting discourses of race, religion, gender, sexuality, caste, and class (8).

Chacko transfers the ownership of the pickle factory to his own name, and his mother is informed "that she was the sleeping partner." (*TGST* 57). So, when the male member defends a female, he extracts his own price. Thus, the family points to "the hypocrisy of the seemingly pious middle-class morality of these people, preaching and practicing two different things" (Jha 114). Ammu in this Syrian Christian family, is a deserted wife and has to live with her parents, because she has no choice at hand. She and her two kids are always treated as a burden on the family, and are constantly confronted with the barb that they have no locus standi. Jilted in love, Baby Kochamma, the spinster aunt of the family, leaves no opportunity to pass comments on them and torture them emotionally. She feels that they are intruders, who have become a power centre of their own in the family by relegating Kochamma to the background.

On the second but more relevant level, power politics is played to the hilt by Baby Kochamma, who has been an old spinster in the house.

> She was Rahel's baby grandaunt, her grandfather's younger sister. Her name was really Navomi, Navomi Ipe, but everybody called her Baby. She became Baby Kochamma when she was old enough to be an aunt (2).

Baby Kochamma had enjoyed a lot of power before Ammu joined the family. She felt that "Ammu and her two-egg twins" (322), have usurped her power and space in the family. So, she hunts out several means to humiliate not only Ammu but also her children. She is the one who is responsible for tragic end of Velutha, the

lover of Ammu, by instigating Inspector Thomas Mathew. Because of her instigation Thomas Mathew does not only bitterly humiliate Ammu by poking on her breasts with his baton, calling her prostitute, but beating Velutha brutally, breaking most of his limbs and turning him into pulp.

The negative attitude of Baby Kochamma increased many folds after she was jilted in her first love with the Irish Priest. She nursed her wound for many years, transferring her frustration on Ammu, Estha and Rahel. She also resented the fulfillment of Ammu in love with Velutha. Her bitter feeling against Ammu family is clear by many references in the novel:

> Baby Kochamma disliked the twins, for she considered them doomed, fatherless waifs. Worse still, they were Half-Hindu Hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry. She was keen for them to realize that they (like herself) lived on sufferance in the Ayemenem House, their maternal grandmother's house, where they really had no right to be. Baby Kochamma resented Ammu, because she saw her quarreling with a fate that she, Baby Kochamma herself, felt she had graciously accepted. The fate of the wretched Man-less woman. The sad, Father Mulligan-less Baby Kochamma. She had managed to persuade herself over the years that her unconsummated love for Father Mulligan had been entirely due to *her* restraint and *her* determination to do the right thing (45).

In the whole novel, Baby Kochamma is much more villainous than any other lady, even Ammu's mother. She has inherent anger against Ammu and her twins because she had this deep-rooted feeling that while she suffered because of her traditional family values by not openly expressing her love for the priest, Ammu did

the opposite by marrying a Bengali and, later on, by carrying a torrid affair with Velutha. In short, it was Ammu's temerity against her timidity that she hated:

> She subscribed wholeheartedly to the commonly held view that a married daughter had no position in her parents' home. As for a *divorced* daughter – according to Baby Kochamma, she had no position anywhere at all. And as for a *divorced* daughter from a *love* marriage, well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma's outrage. As for a *divorced* daughter from an *intercommunity love* marriage–Baby Kochamma chose to remain quiveringly silent on the subject.
>
> The twins were too young to understand all this, so Baby Kochamma grudged them their moments of high happiness when a dragonfly they'd caught lifted a small stone off their palms with its legs, or when they had permission to bathe the pigs, or they found an egg – hot from a hen (45-46).

Her golden chance of taking revenge comes when the disappearing and drowning of Sophie Mol is reported to the Kottayam police resulting into the arrest and killing of Velutha. While Ammu pleads for Velutha's innocence, Baby Kochamma concocts a different story. She convinces Inspector Thomas of the role of Velutha in that episode. She plays on the fear of Thomas, who has a growing daughter. If the elicit love between a caste Christian and a low-born Velutha is allowed to continue, this virus of forbidden love may affect his daughter too. So, the Inspector brushed aside the fear of Comrade Pillai who may raise voice against Velutha's killing in a false case. Baby Kochamma even dreams of long years of prison for Ammu with related torture:

> Baby Kochamma built up her case. She drew (from her imagination) vivid picture of prison life. The cockroach-crisp

> food. The *chhi-chhi* piled in the toilets like soft brown mountains. The bedbugs. The beatings. She dwelled on the long years Ammu would be put away because of them. How she would be an old, sick woman with lice in her hair when she came out—if she didn't die in jail, that was (317).

The hatred of Baby Kochamma for Ammu family goes to the extent of creating fear in the minds of the twins to give a false witness that Velutha had abducted the children. This evidence given by the children, will save the Inspector against the charge of fatal beating of Velutha:

> "So!" she said, with a bright, brittle smile, the strain beginning to tell in her voice. "What shall I tell the Inspector Uncle? What have we decided? D'you want to save Ammu or shall we send her to jail?"
>
> As though she was offering them a choice of two treats. Fishing or bathing the pigs? Bathing the pigs or fishing?
>
> The twins looked up at her. Not together (but almost) two frightened voices whispered, "Save Ammu."
>
> In the years to come they would replay this scene in their heads. As children. As teenagers. As adults. Had they been deceived into doing what they did? Had they been tricked into condemnation? (318)

The love between Ammu and Velutha is a befitting reply to power game because a caste Christian has accepted a Paravan for her lover. Thus, love between them would triumph over power struggle between haves and have-nots. But that is not to be; because this is not acceptable to Baby Kochamma and Inspector Thomas, who want to maintain the status quo in the ongoing power politics. The vivid description of Velutha's beating is simply a reminder that how determined are the forces put against this ending of power game.

Even the arrest of Velutha by the Kottayam police is full of horror details:

> They heard the thud of wood on flesh. Boot on bone. On teeth. The muffled grunt when a stomach is kicked in. The muted crunch of skull on cement. The gurgle of blood on a man's breath when his lung is torn by the jagged end of a broken rib (308).

The torture of Velutha, his brutal beating, is not something related to common criminal. It looks like a war that is waged by a mighty power to crush a weak state, so that the latter may never raise head again against the century old system of the brave enjoying everything at the cost of the weak. Here are the last moments of hell meted out to Velutha in the police custody:

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

Next level of power politics is played by Comrade K.N.M. Pillai. He should have opposed Mammachi and her family as they were capitalist and sided with Velutha, a party worker. But

Comrade Pillai gets order for his printing, "Lucky Press" (13), from the Paradise Pickles & Preserves factory; he prints the labels of bottles produced in the factory. Ironically, for Comrade his leftist ideology is put aside for the sake of material gains. So, he does not help Velutha at all during his last crisis. There is a personal grudge as well and political ambition too. Comrade Pillai feels jealous of young Velutha, when he comes to his house, and Comrade's wife, Kalyani, welcomes him with subtle smile. Thus, young Velutha, in the imaginative mind of older Pillai, becomes a challenge; he creates a sexual fear in Pillai, who has doubt about the warm welcome Kalyani extends to Velutha; though it may be all because of Kalyani's civil, good nature. Furthermore, Velutha was young and energetic card-holder of the Communist Party at the factory of Mammachi. In due course of time, he may pose a challenge to Pillai's local headship of the party:

> The only snag in Comrade K. N. M. Pillai's plans was Velutha. Of all the workers at Paradise Pickles, he was the only card-holding member of the Party, and that gave Comrade Pillai an ally he would rather have done without. He knew that all the other Touchable workers in the factory resented Velutha for ancient reasons of their own. Comrade Pillai stepped carefully around this wrinkle, waiting for a suitable opportunity to iron it out (121).

By not helping Velutha with the party and the police, Pillai settles his old scores in one stroke. This paradoxical situation becomes very obvious because the Communist Party was founded to help people like Velutha from being exploited and mistreated. After many years of the main event, when Estha visits Ayemenem and pays courtesy call to Pillai, the Comrade is slightly perturbed,

remembering his past role in the whole game. But his conscience is so weak that he saves himself by the logic of power politics:

> Though his part in the whole thing had by no means been a small one, Comrade Pillai didn't hold himself in any way personally responsible for what had happened. He dismissed the whole business as the Inevitable Consequence of Necessary Politics. The old omelette and eggs thing. But then, Comrade K. N. M. Pillai was essentially a political man. A professional omeletteer. He walked through the world like a chameleon. Never revealing himself, never appearing not to. Emerging through chaos unscathed (14).

The next bitter paradoxical situation in the power game is the Kottayam Police office, where the board displayed full form of POLICE as:

> **P**oliteness
> **O**bedience
> **L**oyalty
> **I**ntelligence
> **C**ourtesy
> **E**fficiency (8, 304)

Ironically enough, none of the above qualities so prominently displayed, is even remotely visible in the words and actions of the Kottayam Police. This type of ironical and paradoxical situation is created because of the power politics operative at several layers of society and administration.

Thus, the power politics in the main story kills the god of small things, Velutha, who was not a high caste person in the social hierarchy. Almost the same system is operative in *The White Tiger* with Balram. But Velutha was innocent while Balram was clever

enough to survive by the tools of the oppressor and rule the roost. Consequently, therefore, the character of Velutha looks more attractive, a memorable tragic character, who would haunt the reader days and months after reading the novel.

> Velutha had finished high school and was an accomplished carpenter. He had his own set of carpentry tools and a distinctly German design sensibility. ... Apart from his carpentry skills, Velutha had a way with machines. Mammachi (with impenetrable Touchable logic) often said that if only he hadn't been a Paravan, he might have become an engineer. He mended radios, clocks, water pumps. He looked after the plumbing and all the electrical gadgets in the house. ...
>
> Velutha knew more about the machines in the factory than anyone else (75).

Caste and class rigidity in Communist Kerala is itself paradoxical. Kerala was the first Indian state with a Communist government. And yet the caste and class system was fully operative during the period of the story in *The God of Small Things*. To quote Cynthia Carey:

> We read... that Paravans were not allowed in by Pappachi. The house represents the strict observation and exclusiveness of hierarchies, of class and caste, of boundaries and affiliations (100).

Ranga Rao supports Cynthia Carey by calling *The God of Small Things* as a protest novel:

> Roy's book is the only one I can think of among Indian novels in English which can be comprehensively described as a protest novel. It is all about atrocities against minorities,

Small Things: children and youth, women and untouchables (56).

Velutha's brutal and untimely death by battering of the police, therefore, is a tragic loss to the society. He had immense potential that was nipped in the bud because of the ongoing game of power politics as depicted in the novel.

Another type of power politics in the novel centres around Ammu and Chacko, the sister-brother pair. Like most of the Indian families, Chacko is conscious as the master of the next generation in the family, because he is the only son. Privileges that he enjoys cannot be shared with his sister, who has to play a secondary role only. As referred to earlier, Mammachi herself can supply girls to her son, but she becomes furious when her daughter has physical relationship with Velutha. Ammu is always conscious of this unjust disparity. So while going to visit Velutha near the river, she wears the old shirt of Chacko. This shirt symbolises assumed maleness of Ammu. Just after that she turns on her radio to listen to the magical song so dear to her heart and after that walks towards the river:

> .... Then suddenly she rose from her chair and walked out of her world like a witch. To a better, happier place.
>
> She moved quickly through the darkness, like an insect following a chemical trail. She knew the path to the river as well as her children did and could have found her way there blindfolded. She didn't know what it was that made her hurry through the undergrowth. That turned her walk into a run. That made her arrive on the banks of the Meenachal breathless. Sobbing. As though she was late for something. As though her life depended on getting there in time. As though

she knew he would be there. Waiting. As though *he* knew she would come.

He did (332).

Keenly aware of his position as the son of the family, Chacko is never hesitant to boast of his status. He brags before Ammu and her children in no uncertain terms that he is the boss all around:

Chacko told Rahel and Estha that Ammu had no Locusts Stand I.

'Thanks to our wonderful male chauvinist society,' Ammu said.

Chacko said, 'What's yours is mine and what's mine is also mine.'

He had a surprisingly high laugh for a man of his size and fatness. And when he laughed, he shook all over without appearing to move (57).

Even the roaring laughter of Chacko indicated above, is symbolic of his self-importance. There are many critics, who are conscious of the secondary status of Ammu in the Ayemenem House. Alex Tickell explains Ammu's situation from legal point of view; it shows the partiality of Indian laws making daughters subordinate to the male member of the family:

In *TGST* we find that the intersecting forms of subjugation that Ammu faces are further reinforced by her poor legal status or locus standi or, as her children misinterpret it, her lack of 'Locusts Stand I', as a Syrian-Christian woman .... By including references to the legal inequality between Ammu and her brother Chacko – who recognizes his own power of

> inheritance by telling her 'what's yours is mine and what's mine is also mine' ... – Roy draws attention, obliquely, to a history of dispossession and a struggle for women's rights in which her own mother was deeply involved (38).

Chacko does not care either for Ammu or her children, though he poses publically that they are a big responsibility for him. In the power game of the family, Chacko is the master now and Ammu is little better than a mute follower. Below is a conversation between them that shows that Ammu, at times, dares to call a spade a spade:

> 'Stop posing as the children's Great Savior!' Ammu said. 'When it comes down to brass tacks, you don't give a damn about them. Or me.'
>
> 'Should I?' Chacko said. 'Are they my responsibility?' He said that Ammu and Estha and Rahel were millstones around his neck (85).

Because of many layers of power game played in Ayemenem, even Arundhati Roy feels that her first novel has political angle to it. Her later works and essays were overtly political, but readers spared *The God of Small Things* from political tag. Yet Roy herself speaks out in her book, *Power Politics*:

> Now, I've been wondering why it should be that the person who wrote *The God of Small Things* is called a writer, and the person who wrote the political essays is called an activist? True, *The God of Small Things* is a work of fiction, but it's no less political than any of my essays. True, the essays are works of nonfiction, but since when did writer forgo the right to write nonfiction? (10-11)

In the storyline of the novel Rahel visits Ayemenem many years after the main event. She recollects that her family members were all involved in power politics, in framing the rules and then breaking them because those rules were oppressive and suppressed their freedom. It is critically narrated in the story as follows:

> Looking back now, to Rahel it seemed as though this difficulty that their family had with classification ran much deeper than the jam-jelly question. Perhaps Ammu, Estha and she were the worst transgressors. But it wasn't just them. It was the others too. They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much. The laws that make grandmothers grandmothers, uncles uncles, mothers mothers, cousins cousins, jam jam, and jelly jelly. It was a time when uncles became fathers, mothers lovers, and cousins died and had funerals. It was a time when the unthinkable became thinkable and the impossible really happened (31).

The oppressive air of Ayemenem was earlier felt by Ammu, who was still young and single, waiting for marriage. She felt if her family selects her groom, he would be a Syrian Christian, an extension of the suffocation that she felt in her family. So, when out to Calcutta for a social function, she deliberately shows interest in a Bengali youth and marries him. Her reasons for this hasty marriage has root in the absolute lack of freedom at Ayemenem:

> Ammu didn't pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted. She thought that *anything*, anyone at all, would be better than returning to Ayemenem. She wrote to

her parents informing them of her decision. They didn't reply (39).

The very fact that parents didn't reply to her letter, indicate their tyrannical attitude towards their daughter.

Even when she returned to her parents after the breakdown of her marriage, the oppressive atmosphere at Ayemenem House was almost the same. She was accepted there not warmly but grudgingly. She uses to drown her misery in her favourite songs from her radio. Her listening to mysterious songs was also her means of forgetting her physical urge, the demand of her young body, and only means she had of freedom from her prison house:

> On the days that the radio played Ammu's songs, everyone was a little wary of her. They sensed somehow that she lived in the penumbral shadows between two worlds, just beyond the grasp of their power. That a woman that they had already damned, now had little left to lose, and could therefore be dangerous. So on the days that the radio played Ammu's songs, people avoided her, made little loops around her, because everybody agreed that it was best to just Let Her Be (44-45).

It should be noted further that falling for Velutha's love, was also her way of escaping to freedom from the regimentation of the Ayemenem House.

In the dictionary of power struggle character like Ammu is labelled a rebel, even more so if the rebellion fails. Like the failed revolution of history, the rebels are subjected to humiliation, torture, and death. Such is the fate meted out to Ammu, making her a part of the great tradition:

> Ammu died in a grimy room in the Bharat Lodge in Alleppey, where she had gone for a job interview as someone's secretary. She died alone. With a noisy ceiling fan for company and no Estha to lie at the back of her and talk to her. She was thirty-one. Not old, not young, but a viable, die-able age.
>
> She had woken up at night to escape from a familiar, recurrent dream in which policemen approached her with snicking scissors, wanting to hack off her hair. They did that in Kottayam to prostitutes whom they'd caught in the bazaar—branded them so that everybody would know them for what they were. *Veshyas*. So that new policemen on the beat would have no trouble identifying whom to harass. Ammu always noticed them in the market, the women with vacant eyes and forcibly shaved heads in the land where long, oiled hair was only for the morally upright (161).

It is relevant here that Inspector Thomas has also called her a *Veshya*. For an Indian woman nothing can be more abusive than this word. The dream, or better nightmare, of dying Ammu intensifies her situation and agony. Her death haunts a sensitive reader as that of Velutha. When Chacko and Rahel go to the crematorium they get only a pot of ashes, a ghastly reminder of Ammu, every inch a vibrant lady while alive. The following lines from the novel point out what society has been doing all along to all failed rebels:

> The crematorium 'In-charge' had gone down the road for a cup of tea and didn't come back for twenty minutes. That's how long Chacko and Rahel had to wait for the pink receipt that would entitle them to collect Ammu's remains. Her ashes. The grit from her bones. The teeth from her smile. The whole

> of her crammed into a little clay pot. Receipt No. Q498673 (163).

Thus, a beautiful lady full of life and zest, has now become a receipt only, a small piece of paper.

What is of significance in *The God of Small Things* is not only its matter but also the manner of expressing that content, not only the subject but how effectively that subject is communicated to the reader by a matching language. The thematic background of the novel is highly personal to Arundhati Roy: Ammu's struggle is largely based on her mother, Mary Roy. Such an agonised story with the addition of intense and tragic love, the curious sensitivity of twins watching everything around in bewilderment, needed innovative language because conventional English meant for colonial sensibility and purpose was not apt enough. Evelyn Nien-Ming Chien (2004) adds further in this context:

> Roy's novel illuminates the complexities of linguistic formation in formerly colonized Indian communities. The political situation affects the individual psyche, as well as the development of language and semiotics. To return to a conception of goodness through language, Roy has to chop English up and start over, afresh, without the stains and staleness of colonial English (156-157).

In a creative novel like *The God of Small Things*, language is applied as a medium for investigation into, and analysis of, the socio-political power structure, and not merely as a story-telling. As Joseph C Mukalel explains:

> Literature consists in the artistic use of language. A novel, a play or a literary essay is a piece of art, just as drawing is a piece of art. ... Literature imprints life itself in the medium

> of language. A novel is not merely a piece of art: it is life painted on the *canvas of language* (40).

Salman Rushdie is also a writer of complex socio-political realities. He might have felt the same problem as Arundhati Roy to express unconventional situations in feelings in conventional English. Rushdie, therefore, has suggested:

> There is a genuine need for political fiction, for books that drew new and better maps of reality, and make new languages with which can understand the world (37).

Darshana Trivedi (1999) compares Kalidasa, who has been known for his power of Classical Sanskrit language, especially his use of similies (*Upma*), with Arundhati Roy. Although there is a big time gap between Kalidasa and Roy and the languages they use are also different, Trivedi's statement is worth noting; especially so when two great writers and their great works are in question:

> Kalidasa and Arundhati Roy share common characteristics but they are alike as well as different at the same time in their use of similies. For the matter of convenience, we can classify Arundhati's use of similies in following manner.
>
> I) Similies which deal with characters
>
> Ii) Similies which deal with incidents
>
> Iii) Similies which deal with minute observation of life (131).

In handling English language, Roy has experimented a lot. Evelyn Nien-Ming Chien (2004) has quoted Roy's own confirmation about what type of English she writes, "I love English. But I want to write my English" (169). The above critic has added further: "The redesign of the structure of the world is intrinsic to Roy's writing.

She is changing not just how we read, but also the world that we read" (166).

The God of Small Things would have been a different novel and not so great a work had it been written in a conventional English. The novel is so subtle, complex and intense that to make it really great and wonderful, Roy has worked on her language very carefully and with caution to induce the desired results in the mind and heart of the reader. Evelyn Nien-Ming Chien (2004) has rightly remarked:

> Roy's narrative plays out Wittgenstein's description of language games. She writes as if she doesn't know the rules. Kind of innocence. Like children. Or like a bad artist. Who likes small things, words that aren't long, words of miniature size. Who writes in half-sentences, communicative bits still in formation... (168).

In the interpretation of text, R.P. Singh (2015), through Derridean concept of "there is nothing outside the text", suggests that *The God of Small Things* is a "celebration of mini narratives" (180-182).

This design of the novelist has been helped by the selection of Estha and Rahel, seven-year old twins, as the main narrators. The twins narrate the story as if they are playing with the game of crossword. This technique of narration through children has its own advantage for Roy, suitably fitting the subject design. Richard J. Lane (2007) elaborates this context further: "One way to start interpreting Roy's 'stylistic acrobatics' is via focalization, i.e., the narrative is being written from the twins' perspective or point of view. ... a child's focalization through the eyes of two adults, suggesting that the twins may have physically aged, but they have

possibly not completely grown up" (99). There is another critic on the language used by Roy – Aïda Balvannandhan (2007), who points out the positive aspect of the language of the twins, working favourably for the narrative of the novel:

> Roy has coloured her language with the children's perception and comprehension of the rules of the English, thus giving not just pleasure in reading but also a deep sense of reality, of entering the world the twins inhabit by making the reader see them in the process of acquisition of the language (125).

Regarding the children being selected as narrator of the novel's story, Nien-Ming Chien (2004) has also emphasized one further point of Arundhati Roy: "I don't sweat the language" she says, "In her novel, *The God of Small Things*, she cultivates intimacy with language: she specializes in forming secret words, children's pidgin, and the language of lovers" (36). Strangely enough, the critic has given *Weird English* as the title of her book from where all the above lines by Evelyn Nien-Ming Chien are quoted, but the title is not negatively used.

Coming to the analysis of the text of the novel in respect of language used, it is clear from *The God of Small Things* that language is carefully used in each paragraph to reinforce the theme of power politics. At normal level, it is either the language of protest or indicating fun directed on the oppressive characters and cutting them to size by enlarging their abnormality. There are other ways of subverting the language for intensifying the power struggle.

Protest, as a tool of power politics, is a key feature in *The God of Small Things*. The language depicts have-nots a little too weak, and so Chacko, a pseudo-communist, tells Pillai: "But

Comrade, you cannot stage their revolution for them. You can only create awareness. Educate them. They must launch their *own* struggle. *They* must overcome their fears." Then Comrade Pillai, in a hectoring voice, quotes Chairman Mao: "Revolution is not a dinner party. Revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence in which one class overthrows another." (*TGST* 280). The tone of the language is such that both Chacko and Pillai look insincere and even absurd. That is precisely the point that Arundhati Roy wants to convey to the reader through the use of apparently sincere language. This is putting solemn words into the mouth of the infidels.

This method of using high sounding words by hypocrites is repeated again when a superfluous character like Chacko, speaks high blown words, 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing', thus making himself a joker:

> 'We're prisoners of War', Chacko said. 'Our dreams have been doctored. We belong nowhere. We sail unanchored on troubled seas. We may never be allowed ashore. Our sorrows will never be sad enough. Our joys never happy enough. Our dreams never big enough. Our lives never important enough. To matter.' (*TGST* 53).

Who could have imagined that this seemingly idealist speaker, would turn out to be a downright hypocrite.

This type of poking fun flung on smug characters continues with the depiction of Baby Kochamma, morally high sounding all the time but a cunning and selfish character making hell of Ammu and her children. She is always described in degrading words because her personality is such. While sitting on a chair she is described thus; "Under the table she swung her tiny, manicured feet, like a

small child on a high chair. They were puffy with edema, like little foot-shaped air cushions" (20). Her facial expression in old age is also butt of satire; "Her eyes spread like butter behind her thick glasses" (20). Bleary eyes have no funnier expression than the one described above. In another description of her appearance has the same mocking content:

> Yellow slivers of cucumber skin flecked her bosom. Her hair, dyed jetblack, was arranged across her scalp like unspooled thread. The dye had stained the skin on her forehead a pale gray, giving her a shadowy second hairline (21).

There is hardly any sympathetic language or words written in her favour. Sometimes it is not only funny but scathing too, because she has been a constant tormentor of Ammu, Estha, and Rahel. Even Kochamma's urinating is given a humiliating and ghastly description:

> Baby Kochamma balanced like a big bird over a public pot. Blue veins like lumpy knitting running up her translucent shins. Fat knees dimpled. Hair on them. Poor little tiny feet to carry such a load! Baby Kochamma waited for half of half a moment. Head thrust forward. Silly smile. Bosom swinging low. Melons in a blouse. Bottom up and out. When the gurgling, bubbling sound came, she listened with her eyes. A yellow brook burbled through a mountain pass (95).

The above impression is given by Rahel, a small seven years child. This can indicate the abhorrent feeling in the mind of the child for an elderly lady, who had been one of the main villains in their life. Roy does not spare her indignation for such a lady, though eighty-three years old, is in fact incarnation of cruelty and smug arrogance.

There are many examples of stylistic innovations in Arundhati Roy's novel selected for this study. These innovations are not a fad or whim for her, but they enrich the thematic development of power game in the novel. Most of these innovations are intuitive to make readers feel what she felt herself of the situation described in the novel. But there are examples of innovations, which can be intellectually analysed. A few of them are given below from *The God of Small Things*:

1. The use of Indian words with English spellings: for example, "Mundus," "raksha"; "Ed Cherukka," "Chacko Saar Vannu" (52, 59, 101, 171), *Malayala Manorama* (171).

2. Making compound words by using hyphens: "Mitten-shaped," "Ammu-eyes," "trying-not-to-cry mouth" (82, 96, 300), "Deep-dimpled" (109), "*die-vorced*" (130), "*Honey-coloured*" (131), "*Thimble-drinker*" and "*Coffin-cartwheeler*" (135 & 141), Hell-oh (143), "roo-shaped" (152), "every-thing" (251), "button-eyed" (166), "double-deckered" (169), "Blue-aproned, white-capped" (172), "Sad-About-Joe" (173), "Rumpelstiltskin-like" (182), "... *demmedel-usive Estha – Pen*" (183), "over-familiar"(184), "cake-crumbs" (186), "Angry-coloured" (185), "AC-DC?" (190), "glue-brush" (194), "grape-crush" (194), "Finger-coloured fingers" (202), "boat-on-legs" (205), "Estha-the-Acurate" (217), "white-walled", "moss-tiled" (228), *Spring-thunder* (287), "Estha-the-Compassionate" (292), "trying-not-to-cry" (300), "reservation-checking" (300), "New-age" (304), "spoiling-the-fun" (308), "Quarter-boiled" (104).

3. Reduplication:

   i) Repeating without change:
   "*go-go*" (4, 152), "*Tap, tap*" (9), "*yo-yo*" (16), "jam jam, and jelly jelly" (31), "*chhi-chhi*" (51, 317), "Shh! Shh!..." (100), "*Parum-parum*" (318), "dum dum"(98), "*Der-dhoom, der-dhoom*" (147), and Hwoop-Hwoop (169). "*Ickilee ickilee*"...(177).

   ii) Repeated by the change of vowel: "slip-slap" (132)

   iii) Repeated by the change of consonant:
   "gristly-bristly"(104), "Clapp-Trapp" (107), "Thang...Than*k*"(154), and "Coca-Cola" (315).

   iv) Repeated by the change of both; vowel and consonant: bottomless-bottomful (107). Orangedrink Lemondrink (108), "Goodnight Godbless" (115), and "Goodgood Very good" (237).

   "Reduplication refers to words formed through repetition of sounds. English is replete with these playful coinages. Many are baby words: tum-tum, pee-pee, boo-boo".

   (Fun with Words: Reduplication - The WriteAtHome Blog blog.writeathome.com/index.php/2013/05/reduplication/)

4. Spelling out letters of a word for special effect: "Prer *NUN* sea ayshun", "*Rej-Oice.... rej-Oice*." (36), "Dee Ay Em En" (damn) (182), and here "Let Her Be" (4) shows an 'explosive mood'.

5. Use of italics for emphasis in part of a sentence or a full sentence: "Why *should* she?", "And *I'm sorry, Colonel Sabhapathy, but I'm afraid I've said my say*," (TGST 21 & 63), *'Porketmunny'* (TGST 102 & 105; without italics, 107), "*As if!*" (149) "*every*body" (149), "*properly*" (150), "*Never*

Mind Her As Long As You've Done The Right Thing." (150), "*Lucky rich boy with porketmunny. …*" (150), "*For VD Sex Complaints contact Dr O. K. Joy*." (151), "*real* dad" (151), "*Sturdy*" (153).

Balvannanadhan (2007) argues, "Italics are used or emphasis, but also to indicate a second meaning or irony in the use of a word" (126).

RejOice in the Lo-Ord Or-Orlways

And again I say re-jOice. (154),

"*I Hate Miss Mitten and I Think Her gnickers are TORN*." (156), "*Story-writing*" (157),

"*When Ulycsses came home his son came and said father I thought you would not come back, many princes came and each wanted to marry Pen Lope, but Pen Lope said that the man who can stoot through the twelve rings can mary me. and everyone failed. and ulysses came to the palace dressed liked a beggar and asked if he could try. the men laughed at him and said if we cant do it you cant. ulysses son stopped them and said let himtry and he took the bow and shot right through the twelve rings.*" (157),

"*Margin? And joint handwriting in future, please!*" (157),

"*Little Ammu*" (158), "*Paul Bunyan*" (159),

"*If I am Talking to somebody, you may interrupt me only if it is very urgent. When you do, please say 'Excuse me'. I will punish you very severely if you disobey these instructions. Please complete your corrections.*" (158-9),

"*Hated* her" (161), "*Left leg, right leg*" (163), "*We be of one blood, ye and I*" (163), "*Lentement*" (166), "*Shopkeeper's daughter*" (167), "traipsing *through* the house" (169), "*What Happened to Our Man of the Masses?*" (173),

"*Oh Esthapappychachen Kuttappen Peter Mon.*

Where, oh where have you gon?" (182),

"*Welcome Home, Our Sophie Mol*" (183),

"*...Is be in heaven? Is be in hell?*

That demmedel-usive Estha –Pen? (183),

"*... Antly Afternoon Gnap*" (186), "*Around now...*" (187), "*Heeaagh!*" (188), "*Anything can happen to Anyone*" (194), "*Girlboy*" (195),

"*Add the Pectin to concentrated juice. Cook for a few (5) minutes.*

Use a strong fire, burning heavily all around.

Add the sugar. Cook until sheeting consistency is obtained. Cool slowly.

Hope you will enjoy this recipe." (196),

"*Prepare to prepare to be prepared.*" (200, 204),

"*If he touched her he couldn't talk to her, if he loved her he couldn't leave, if he spoke he couldn't listen, if he fought he couldn't win.*" (217),

"*My* house, *my* pineapple, *my* pickle." (225),

"... *was* no Each, no Other." (225),

"*They are your brothers. Your own flesh and blood. Promise me that you will not go to war against them. Promise me that.*" (233),

"*I promise you this*, Karna said to Kunti. *You will always have five sons. Yudhishtra I will not harm. Bhima will not die by my band. The twins—Nakula and Sahadeva—will go untouched by me. But Arjuna—him I will make no promises about. I will kill him, or he will kill me. One of us will die.*" (233-4),

"*Finish your homework. Eat your egg. No, we can't not go to school.*" (250).

"*I can't imagine what came over me, she wrote. I can only put it down to the effect of the tranquilizers. I had no right to behave the way I did, and want you to know that I am ashamed and terribly, terribly sorry.*" (264),

"*Work is Struggle. Struggle is Work.*" (268),

"*Ajantha*" (269),

"*Wherever in the world a poor man goes,*

No no no no no vacancy!" (269),

"*O, young Lochin varhas scum out of the vest,*

Through wall the vide Border his teed was the bes;

Tand savissgood broadsod heweapon sadnun,

Nhe rod all unarmed, and he rod al lalone." (271),

"*Nutcracker Suite*" (284),

"*It is not in the Party's interests to take up such matters.*

Individual's interest is subordinate to the organization's interest.

Violating Party Discipline means violating Party Unity.

…

Progress of the Revolution.

Annihilation of the Class Enemy.

Comprador capitalist.

Spring-thunder." (287),

"*Tomorrow*" (288), "*Things will get worse*" (290),

"*If it weren't for you I would be free. I should have dumped you in an orphanage the day you were born. You're the millstones round my neck*" (291), "*I love you I love you*" (297 & 298), "*Bye, Estha. Godbless*" (300), "*Soviet Stooge, Running Dog*" (301), "*Pack your things and leave*" (302), "*Little Man. He lived in a cara-van. Dum dum.*" (319),

"*Quick piss.*

Hot foam on warm stone.

Police-piss.

Drowned ants in yellow bubbly.

Deep breaths." (307).

"*But that will never!*" (325),

"W*here do old birds go to die? Why don't dead ones fall like stones from the sky?*" (328),

"*There's no time to lose*

I heard her say

Cash your dreams before

They slip away

Dying all the time

Lose your dreams and you

Will lose your mind." (332),

" *'Tomorrow?'*

'Tomorrow.' " (339 & 340) and

"*We do it to each other too.*" (340)

6. Using phrases on their own i.e. a phrase in parenthesis as a full sentence: "a viable die-able age", "A rushing, rolling, fishswiming sense" (3, 30).

7. Frequent references to famous writers, books and their characters, and the characters of cartoon, and films : "*The Tempest* abridged by Charles and Mary Lambs", "Sydney Carton", "Charles Darnay", "*A Tale of Two Cities*", "Lochinvar by Sir Walter Scott" (59, 61 & 271) and a cartoon fictional character, Popeye the Sailor Man, as: "I'm Popeye the sailor man dum dum" (98) and "Julie Andrews" as in Film *The Sound of Music*.

8. Writing words together as if they are a single word: "Yesyesyesyesyes," "thiswayandthat", *"Porketmunny",* "Ofcourseofcourse. Orangelemon? Lemonorange?",

"moonwalked" (56, 107 & 109), "townspeople" (173), "brittlewhite", and "snakeskin" (202).

9. The contradictions and paradoxes: "The Pessimist and the Optimist" (238),

Fast faster fest

Never let it rest

Until the fast is faster.

And the faster's fest (103).

10. Palindrome at word or sentential level: "A palindrome is a word, number, phrase, or other sequence of characters which reads the same backward as forward." Examples are from the novel:

STOP…'POTS', BE INDIAN, BYE INDIAN …. 'NAIDNI YUB, NAIDNI EB' (58), "*ehT sertanrvdA fo eisuS lerriuqS. enO gnirps gninrom eisuS lerriuqS ekow pu.*", "*Malayalam* and *Madam I'm Adam*" (60), Satan….nataS (60),

"ssenetiloP," he said. "ssenetiloP, ecneidebO."

"ytlayoL, ecnegilletnI," Rahel said.

"ysetruoC."

"ycneiciffE." (313).

Arundhati Roy uses natural objects for her similes: "Her tears trickled down from behind them and trembled along her jaw like rain drops on the edge of a roof" (5).

"She imagined him dropping like a dark star out of the sky that he had made" (6).

She also uses the combinations of opposites in this novel. They are many, like "bottomless-bottomful feelings" (107); inventions like "greenmossing," (10) "geting-outedness," (172) "Sad-About-Joe silence" (173), "Stoppited" (141), " 'Men's Needs' entrance," (295), and the use of Malayalam words in English spelling; "Ayemenem" (1) which has been recognised by C.D. Narasimhaiah (1999) as, "the oppressive atmosphere of the village of Ayemenem" (97), "Modalali Mariakutty" (82), "*Aiyyo*", "*Orkunnilley*", "*Oower*" (128), "*Aiyyo paavam*" (131), "*Orkunnundo*" (134), "*Chacko Saar vannu*" (171), "... Mollykutty, Luckykutty, Beena Mol" (172), "*Sundarikutty*" (179),

"Esthapappychachen Kuttappen Peter Mon" (182),

"Veluthapappychachen Peter Mon?" (213),

"*Thaiy thay thaka rbazy thaiy thome!" ... "Enda da korangacha, chandi ithra thenjada?" ... "Pandyill thooran poyappol nerakkamathiri nerangi njan.*" (196),

"*Pa pera-pera-pera-perakka,*

Endeparambil thooralley

Chetendeparambil thoorikko.

Pa pera-pem-pera-perakka." (206),

"*Aiyyo, Mon! Mol!*" (208), "Mol" and "Mon",

"*Pandoru mukkuvan muthinupoyi, ...*

Padinjaran katarbu mungipoyi,...

Arayathi pennu pizhachu poyi,..." (219-220)

"*Esthapappychachen Kuttappen Peter Mon*" (227), "Kochu", "Vellya" (228), "addeham" (270), "Allay edi" (278), "*Madiyo?... Madi aayirikkum*" (310), "*Rombo maduram*" (323), "*Chappu Thamburan*" (339), and "Naaley" (340).

The above examples illustrate the narrator's bold use of language and her bold assertion that suits her thematic design of power game. Most often, the similes exhibit a keen sense of humour. One example is: Lenin, K.N.M. Pillai's son, dressed in yellow shirt and black shorts is compared to a taxi: "dressed like a taxi." Comparing Lenin with taxi is also meant to degrade hypocrite Pillai in the eyes of the reader. The second one serves as language of protest too: "Baby Kochamma rose between them like a hill" (23).

In rendering Estha and Rahel's attempt to understand and assert their place in the world through language, she has telescoped words together. This empowers both of them in their own self esteem in the face of their constant demeaning in the Ayemenem House, specially by Baby Kochamma and Chacko. The twins want to show them their own skill in language. Examples are: *suddenshudder*, *furrywhirring*, *sariflapping*, *slipperoily*, "Verrrry sweet" (323) etc. Adding to these Roy exchanged syllables between them, as; *redly dead* etc. Further, she used to split them apart; *Lay Ter, Bar Nowl* etc. and coined in the process new words, as; *hostling, stoppited, bursty* etc. With the *onset* and *coda* in modern language and linguistics, especially structuralism, emphasis was placed on the spoken form of language, and with this new insight into the structure of language came to develop.

Language is no longer studied as an unchanging, wholly absolute phenomenon. Today stress is put on the changing characteristics as well. As the spoken as well as written form of language came to be emphasized, and insights are developed with regards to the

changing nature of the spoken or written language; the role of *change* in language came to receive considerable attention. As in *The God of Small Things*, Little Latha said, "mydearjudges and……" she looked around at the imaginary audience crowded into the small, hot room, 'beloved friends.' She paused theatrically. … She swayed slightly as she spoke. (*TGST* 271), and, in the spoken form of language, the role of *change* in language is exemplified.

The conversation of a seemingly intelligent son of Comrade K.N.M. Pillai, Lenin, is an example of 'the role of change in language' as in shouting the whole of Mark Antony's speech and most of 'Lochinvar' earlier;

> *'lend me yawYERS;'……*
>
> *'I cometoberry Caeser, not to praise him.*
>
> *Theevil that mendo lives after them,*
>
> *The goodisoft interred with their bones;'* (*TGST* 274)

Lenin articulated these words fluently, without any hesitation, though he was only six and didn't understand a word of what he was saying.

In the same context Émilienne Baneth-Nouailhetas (2002) is right in her comment on the above example of *The God of Small Things*:

> Indeed, memorizing and reciting are valued activities in the little world of Ayemenem. For some, the reasons for this are quite clear-cut, and have already been evoked: 'Comrade' Pillai's mastery of slogans evinces his ideological position; Baby Kochamma's insistence on teaching the twins canonical English texts or prayers, as the one they rehearse for Sophie

> Mol's ride to Ayemenem – with perfect pronunciation .... reveals a yearning for Englishness. In this instance, as in the case of Comrade Pillai's niece and son's recitations, the English text stands for institutional power and memorization for a subjection to this power. To a certain extent, Chacko shares the same attitude, although he characteristically does not recognize any of his own culture in the wooden, accented recitation of 'Lochinvar' performed for him. (152)

Arundhati Roy's language-games are perhaps her remarkable literary device. It is an important poetic speciality of the novel under study, where Roy plays with grammar. Hence, chapter ten of *The God of Small Things*, 'The River in the Boat' has become densely poetic. Roy has depicted: "A gray old boatplant with boatflowers and boatfruit. And underneath, a boat-shaped patch of withered grass. A scurrying, hurrying boatworld" (202). These repetitions have been noticed and analysed by Richard J. Lane, as:

> Repetition of the word 'boat' in the passage functions through a process of accumulation and amplification, leading to the compound words of 'boatplant', 'boatflowers' and 'boatfruit'. Repetition of the word 'White' leads to variation on a theme, climaxing with the realization that darkness preserves the objects of the hidden boatworld, whereas light bleaches and destroys it (foreshadowing the coming to light of Ammu's and Velutha's transgressions). .. .
>
> The boat has 'almost' taken root, and this signifies that it is still *detached* from the world of total death and decay, that it still has the possibility of returning to its fully functioning life (TPN 106).

"Language," says Roy "is the skin on my thought". She explains further: "As a writer, one spends a lifetime journeying into the

heart of language, trying to minimize, if not eliminate, the distance between language and thought" (PP 152). Minimum the distance between thought and its matching expression, better for the creative work. Arundhati Roy has achieved that near perfectly in *The God of Small Things*. The power game, with all its ramifications, and its apt expression in language has been praised by all over the English speaking world. Critics speak of Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a grand theme expressed in grand style. In this novel, the 'lost paradise' is similarly expressed in masterly style. Many Indian English novelists have experimented with English language. But no one has surpassed Roy's *The God of Small Things*.

Chapter 3

Oppressor Strikes Back:
Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

The White Tiger is the debut novel of Aravind Adiga for which he has been awarded the 40th Man Booker Prize in the same year of its publication. Adiga is the fourth novelist from India, who has been able to earn this prize. Apart from him Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, and Kiran Desai have also been awarded the Booker Prize. The literary production of Adiga includes; *The White Tiger* (2008), *Between the Assassinations* (2008), *Last Man in Tower* (2011), and *Selection Day* (2016). He is known for introducing new ideas in Indian English novel. Marcela Valdes (2011) speaks on Adiga:

> Adiga knows economics well, should come as no surprise. After all, he worked as a financial journalist for Time magazine in India, and his first novel, '*The White Tiger*,' reveled in the darker consequences of a world turned flat. The story described a servant seduced by visions of wealth who murders his way out of poverty. It was as popular as it was controversial in India, and in Britain it captured the Man Booker Prize (1).

The White Tiger examines the dialectics of growth and development in India. He has written for many magazines too; *Financial Times, Money,* and *Time*. Adiga's ideas are inspired by literature; but one of the shaping spirits is economics, which plays a major role in the Indian society, especially in a backward state like Bihar. Secondly,

the feudal mindset, described in the novel, is also very much ingrained in the day to day socio-political realities of Bihar.

Elen Turner (2012) contextualizes Adiga and represents his position in contemporary Indian English Fiction. He describes the situation of the likes of Ashok in the novel:

> Much of this revolves around the lives of the educated, urban, English-speaking elite. Characters are middle-class, with aspirations of social and economic mobility, from sections of society benefiting from the economic liberalization that began in India in the early 1990s. Some are set in India's premier educational institutions, or fictionalized versions of them, or in what are collectively known as IT enabled workplaces — call centres, banks, or business process outsourcing companies (BPOs). Characters are usually young and grapple with some kind of identity crisis brought about by the "clash" of tradition and contemporary life (1).

On the one hand, India witnesses the mushrooming of high palatial buildings, which may represent India's modern and global economic development; on the other hand, there is another dimension of India, which is suffering from abject poverty. It is evident from what Balram Halwai says: "...at a time when India is undergoing 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 is what I am trying to do- it is not an attack on the country, it is about the greater process of self-examination" (10), writes Peter Robins in his review.

Aravind Adiga exposes many inequalities in Indian society. Balram, the protagonist in the novel, is by his plight is force to understand the reality of the prevalent situation of the Indian society. He kills

his master in cold blood only because he knows that the police will never suspect him. R.K. Dhawan refers to the similar reality in his edited book, *Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger': A Symposium of Critical Response* (2011) when he points out "... the protagonist is well aware of the loopholes in the existing law and order situation in India" (13). In fact, *The White Tiger* presents spectacle to the readers, a theatre house that exhibits the sports of life played in both light and darkness. The darkness craves to get the touch of sunshine. The destitute protagonist Balram, once called Munna, a symbol of smallness, has to become the white tiger-the rarest creature of society. Once a servant, always a servant is the saying that is not acceptable to this growing person of the novel. The family in which this Munna is born, the dark society that nurtures him, the power of Stork in the village, that rules over him, cannot confine his free and fearless spirit to grab the moment of power of an entrepreneur. The contemporary concept of marginality has its depiction in the texts which finds much of its reality in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*. As Samuel Missal (2015) points out, "Marginality is a ubiquitous term in postcolonial texts. Often seen as the outcome of colonial subordination in term of race, class, ethnicity or gender, the marginal critiques the imperial centre." (1)

The expression like "The Rooster Coop", which has come several times in the novel, finds apt justification in the present day Indian society and culture. As Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal (2013) says:

> This rooster coop is the root cause of perpetual servitude for millions of people in the country. Why does the rooster coop work? It is the slavish, non-enterprising nature of the poor which makes the coop work. They do not want to break the coop as there is no entrepreneurship in them" (72).

The victims of cruel and violent rule and the sufferers of dominant power have lost the consciousness to raise their voices against the oppressors. The Indian English literature has many novelists addressing this seminal but neglected issue of our society. For example, Mulk Raj Anand earned specialty in the subject when he defended his characters giving them the voice of wailing, suffering and arrogance. Arundhati Roy has rebuked openly the coloniser through her powerful narrative style and embossing imagination. Now comes Aravind Adiga with a plausible solution to the problem by giving shape to the revolutionary character called Balram—the white tiger.

Frantz Fanon, the thinker and philosopher, explains his view of the hero when he argues in his *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963). It is essential to allow violence to initiate bringing reform to language, rhetoric, the structure of culture, and also the government so that the marginalised and victimised may enjoy political autonomy; Fanon is of the view:

> … national liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the heading used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon (35).

The shaping atmosphere around Balram creates the blanket of darkness which has been suffocating him since long. He is subjected to so many dismal and humiliating actions and situations. Frequently, his emotions are suppressed; his eyes have received the pathetic and deplorable contour, shape, size and gesture of his father, who is a true embodiment of deprivation, hardship, malnutrition, and, the worst of all, an object of humiliation. Adiga applies his creativity in using metaphor to drive home the fact of the poverty-stricken people. This literary device is used to associate this fact with the physical

properties. As Martin Gray in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1985) says "A metaphor goes further than a comparison between two different things or ideas by fusing them together: one thing described as being another thing, thus 'carrying over; all association" (121). Balram's conscious of the deformity in him when he makes a contrast of this pathetic picture of his father by putting the picture of any rich person by his side. To quote the text:

> A rich man's body is like a premium cotton pillow, white and soft and blank. Ours are different. My father's spine was a knotted rope, the kind that women use in villages to pull water from wells; the clavicle curved around his neck in high relief, like a dog's collar; cuts and nicks and scars, like little whip marks in his flesh, ran down his chest and waist, reaching down below his hip bones into his buttocks. The story of a poor man's life is written on his body, in a sharp pen (26-27).

In the above passage, there are references of simile and metaphor, which are used to show the real image of the gap between the haves and have-nots. The expressions 'body is like a premium cotton pillow, white and soft and blank' 'like a dog's collar' 'cuts and nicks and scars, like little whip marks in his flesh' are examples of simile. 'My father's spine was a knotted rope' is the metaphor that supplies the pathetic picture of hardship as well as a hidden sense of anger in Balram for the plight of his father.

Adiga has used so many Indian words and slangs to give a graphic touch to Indian sensibility in this novel. The expression like "What a fucking joke" to show anger, the language of high class Indian society "Bastard", Sister Fucker", "donkey", "Country Mouse" etc. show the administration of rude power imposed on the low class people as well as the low esteem in which they are treated by the rich. The language used by the rich and powerful has to indicate the

voice of hypocrisy, cruelty and duplicity. The standard of the language used by sophisticated and powerful class has no regard for those enumerable mass, who has been subjected to nothingness and void. Who can be blamed for Munna, whose mind is a *tabula rasa*, on which something is being engraved about our so called advancing Indian society? Usha Bande (2019) describes the sharp mind of Munna:

> Munna to his parents becomes Balram in school; his quickness earns him the epithet 'White Tiger' from a pleased school Inspector, who sees in him a rare species in 'the jungle' of idiots (9).

Additionally, it is wrong when reviewers and critics, call Balram a criminal, culprit, villain, and what not. In fact, this character has to represent the low class people of our society who are being conditioned by exposure of high standard of life style, making an inroad through powerful media. The oppressive mechanism of society creates temptation in the oppressed to get mixed with the temptation of violence. As Ashish Nandy (1986) comments:

> The temptation is to use a psychological mechanism more congruent with the basic rules of the oppressive system so as to have a better scope to express one's aggressive drives. The temptation is to equal one's tormentors in violence and to regain one's self-esteem as a competitor within the same system (354).

This is clear when the son of a rickshaw puller struggles hard to pick up the occupation of a driver who avails the opportunity of serving the aristocrat master. The dismal situation drives him to catch-up with the glamour of the city. Initially, Balram is innocent and quite free from the twists and turns of towns and cities. The use of

metaphor ‘raw’ in the following line suggests his purity: “He’s raw from the village, still pure. Let city life corrupt him first” (148). His association with the other city drivers, trains him to be tempted by different sorts of misdeeds like theft, bribe, permissive sex and so on. The language reflects the attitude, and to have the proper attitude one picks up in a profession is the secret behind success. Balram has to prove his worth and for that matter he must adopt such an attitude of language, if he wants to survive in the Metro culture. Here, he is being trained by a professional driver:

> It’s not enough to drive. You’ve got to become a *driver*. You’ve got to get the right attitude, understand? Anyone tries to overtake you on the road, do this’ - he clenched his fist and shook it – ‘and call him a sister-fucker a few times. The road is a jungle, get it? A good driver must roar to get ahead on it (57).

The use of bad words and calling names to others shows power or administration. One becomes more powerful if one uses such words frequently, only to challenge the authority of established norms of society. A driver becomes the ruler of the road if he is posing himself as a wild tiger on the jungle of the road. It is not that power is stationed merely on the top, or on the highest position. The power is as such as its flow in the lower strata of society also. The driver in Balram is being groomed to enjoy such power only because he has to ride to the highest ladder of entrepreneurship. Mr. Mukesh, the brother of Ashok, is also found using such foul words to reflect his high status. He uses words and slangs of oppressive class people, such as ‘bastard’, sister fucker’. ‘country-mouse’, ‘son of pig’, ‘donkey’ and so on.

The angel-like innocence of Balram’s childhood days must not be discounted. His father wants him to stand in the row of such people of our society who are blessed with silvery sunshine. The

society has no reason for blaming the big heart of a father that cherishes this sweet dream for his son. The importance regarding his primary education is expressed in these words of Balram's father, "How many times I have told you: Munna must read and write!" (28) Further, "My whole life, I have been treated like donkey. All I want is that one son of mine – at least one – should live like a man" (30). Balram's innocence in his *Munna-like* name could not have understood what his father expected from him in being "like a man". The simile used here represents masculinity and power. The personal experience of his father has been a matter of regret for him. He wants his son to get the touch of magnanimity. He wants him to have all those things in life for which he has been craving. One must live and die with the sense of humanity and pity. Adiga has given so many paradoxical statements which themselves are self-contradictory, but they are successful in presenting the real truth of life and society. Sometimes odds are more real than symphony or blend of music. The high and the low do meet at certain point and get mixed up. Contemporary life itself is combination of contradictions. Here is the depiction of this life situation when the novelist asserts, "one infallible law of life in the Darkness is that good news becomes bad news" (36). Balram strains up his life journey from this paradoxical world to get the exposer of light first in the city of Delhi, and then in Bangalore.

Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee (2015) has argued:

> Just as in the "darkness" of northern Bihar, this informal apartheid reflects unequal access to power and privileges. Balram drives Mr. Ashok to the President's House, on the top of Lutyens' and Bajer's Raisina Hill complex, in order to offer bribes to a minister. ... Chauffeurs gather outside the malls and colonies, flicking through the popular crime and murder

> weeklies and dreaming of committing lurid acts of violence (293).

The innocent driver in him is tamed and trained in the world of apparent light which has deep darkness within. The lesson of the professional driver that he cannot learn to fail, and so the novelist has this remarkable statement:

> … if your driver is busy flicking through the pages of *Murder Weekly*, relax. No danger to you. Quite the contrary.
>
> It's when your driver starts to read about Gandhi and the Buddha that it's time to wet your pants, Mr. Jiabao (126).

The socio-economic aspect of life has to confront the contradiction in the form of the rich and the poor and this issue has been put to limelight in the novel in these lines:

> The dreams of the rich, and the dreams of the poor – they never overlap, do they?
>
> See, the poor dream all their lives of getting enough to eat and looking like the rich. And what do the rich dream of?
>
> Losing weight and looking like the poor (225).

The language device of phonology such as alliteration, consonance, and assonance has gained much space in the narration which reflects the attitude of the writer. Adiga has the sensibility to invigorate his imaginative faculty to capture the essence of the psychic state of the character interplaying with the instant situation. Alliteration is the apt device to catch hold of the sense and meaning in the action being performed. Defining alliteration, Chris Baldick in *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008) says: "the repetition of the same sounds … usually initial component of words or of stressed syllable in any

sequence of neighboring words" (8). The murder of Ashok is just not a complete escape from the murderer's mental space. Balram bears him in his mind and so he speaks:

> Mr. Ashok's face reappears now in my mind's eye as it used to every day when I was in his service—reflected in my rear view mirror (46).

The sound 'm' in the above quote reveals the psychic process he is going through. He is not ready to forget his action and the image of his master Ashok is quite indelible. The contrast between rich and poor gets word picture in the following lines: "Plump, punchy men and even plumper, paunchier women, with big circles of sweat below their arms, are doing their evening "walking" (225). The repetition of the sound 'p' and 'pl' in the above mentioned quote represents a contrast between the identity of rich and poor persons. The rich have ample food and feed them so they are plump. But the poor are denied this supply and so they are lean and thin. The use of obtrusive sound supplies proper meaning to the context. The mood and the message which come out from the following narration is striking, "These people were building homes for rich, but they lived in tents covered with blue tarpaulin sheets, and partitioned into lanes by lines of sewage" (260). The preponderant sound /p/, /t/, and /k/ reveal the administration of harsh power on the marginalised and weaker status of the people, who are instrumental in bringing comfort and ease to the affluent class of people of our society. Such is the social structure of our society that the voice of the innocent and the weaker is not allowed any importance and space. Aravind Adiga has used so many negative markers putting them in the front position only to reinforce this situation of our society. Some samples are given below:

(a) "Not that I have anything against great men" (3).
(b) "No one blames the schoolteacher for doing this" (33).

(c) “No history of supporting Naxals or other terrorists” (66).

The so-called development of our society is being motivated by technology that empowers the rich to exploit the poor. The technology-bred society has the tendency to support the rich by thinking of the poor as resource to satiate the greedy human needs. The have-nots have no option left for them to enjoy the fruit of the innovative and sophisticated technology; rather they are forced to use them for the benefit of their masters who own them. The device of imagery that the novelist has used demands attention here “... you know how we Indians just take technology like ducks to water” (12). The image of ‘ducks’ has created the sense of the operative workers who are compelled to be used by the technology and conditioned by the restriction imposed on them. The machine starts ruling over them for the knowledge and money behind the machine is applied by the rich and the so-called powerful people of our society.

Thus, the novel represents the condition of the destitute, including prostitutes living a life of hell. Geoffrey Kain (2001) draws a parallel condition of poverty in the writings of Prafulla Mohanti. Aravind Adiga and Mohanti seem to present a dark picture of Indian social and economic realities. His paper articulates the fact that:

> The change he cites here are clearly presented as a corruption of the village as it exists (or existed) in a sort of essential or more ideal state. Interestingly, Mohanti notes the appearance of prostitution alongside the coming of stainless steel and plastic, implying that these materials are the harbingers of an invasive decrepitude and immorality-particularly as they seep into the village willy-nilly, without thoughtful planning, upsetting the inherent order of things (1).

The corruption in the educational instituition of the present day Indian scenario is to shape the mind. Both the political and economic power of the so-called welfare government is vividly exposed by Adiga. The novel gives space when his protagonist unreels his mind stored with such impressions. Balram has to brood:

> There was supposed to be free food at my school – a government program 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 schoolteacher had stolen our lunch money.
>
> 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 the school with uniforms that the government had sent for us; we never saw them, but a week later they turned up for sale in the neighboring village (32-33).

The use of *rotis* and *daal* in the above passage indicates the concern of the deprived and marginalized working class of people in India, who cannot dream beyond these food items. The corrupt people in government agencies misuse their power to exploit the poor in a one-sided power game.

All sorts of social diseases crop up in the Indian society because the moral and value system of society has lost its relevance. The hierarchy of corruption in the administration that operates such an education system comes to focus. Such an exposition of prevalent

power game where the poor cannot fight back, is a recurrent theme in the novel. The headmaster is corrupt only to be the part of the corrupt system constructed by the powerful. Adiga says:

> No one blamed the schoolteacher for doing this. You can't expect a man in a dung heap to smell sweet. Every man in the village knew that he would have done the same in his position. Some were even proud of him, for having got away with it so cleanly (33).

The headmaster has to accept the abusive language of the inspector, who has to administer his power on him, and so he speaks:

> There is no duster in this 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? (34).

The abusive language used by the inspector does indicate this ongoing power politics. The real intention of the inspector is to share the booty. The headmaster must submit to his power. He cannot defend himself in front of the inspector only because he is a culprit. Upamanyu Chatterjee (1988) in *English August: An Indian Story* presents the same picture of rural India where corruption is deeply rooted.

The protagonist of *The White Tiger*, Balram, has the understanding of the language used by his father and the cruel action heaped on him by the rich in the later part of his life. The very innocence of his mind and his magnanimity for the small and weak creatures has true reflection when he is praying to his father when the latter is killing a lizard. Barlam uses such pleading language as this, “Don't kill it, Daddy – just throw it out the window, please?... Don't kill it, Daddy – please!” (30). This innocent appeal of Balram is not granted. The power of violence in his father turns him almost deaf:

> But he wouldn't listen. He kicked the cupboard, and the lizard darted out, and he chased it again, smashing everything in his way, and yelling, 'Heeyaa! Heeyaa!' He pounded it with the pot of toddy until the pot broke. He smashed its neck with his fist. He stamped on its head (30).

The use of words like 'kicked', 'yelling', 'smashed', and 'stamped' signifies the brutality of blind power administered on the helpless lizard. Finally, the lizard has to die as its head is unable to bear the pressure of his stamping. The violent underplay leaves him panting for some time. The picture of viciousness that his father has exhibited remains a mystery for the innocent child in Balram. Such violent sports come into play near the feet of the Lord Buddha which is presenting the picture of contrast. Lord Buddha is worshiped for non-violence. The religion of society has always favoured the power in hand of the people who are in the centre. Thus, power game can begin even with a poor person, who enjoys occasional power, like the father of Balram. This example points to the corrupting influence of power on all and sundry.

The inspector then writes a passage on the blackboard on the very theme of the grandeur and glory of the nation for which all Indians feel proud today. The passage ironically reads:

> We live in a glorious land. The Lord Buddha received his enlightenment in this land. The River Ganga gives life to our plants and our animals and our people. We are grateful to God that we were born in this land (34).

But no one cares for maintaining that glory; majority of them rather indulge in most corrupt practices in the name of power politics. No boy in the class hoped that only Balram can be able to read this

passage. This single incident is enough to indicate that Balram is meant for something different and higher.

The inspector is impressed with his extra ordinary ability and, as a token of reward for the intelligent answer, he receives from him a new name, "not *any* kind of tiger" (276), but "The white tiger" (35). While revealing the secret behind his crowning success Balram has to say to the Chinese premier:

> I never finished school, to put it bluntly. Who cares! I haven't read many books, but I've read all the ones that count. I know by heart the works of the four greatest poets of all time – Rumi, Iqbal, Mirza Ghalib, and a fourth fellow whose name I forget. I am a self-taught entrepreneur (6).

The semi-educated and the illiterate have the impression that they do not have the good words to express their feelings and emotions. They underrate themselves in the matter of the use of language. Although Balram does not have a formal language training imparted to him, he has the uncanny realization of the meaning of the sophisticated expressions. It is ironical that the elites of our society, who are the preservers of language, provide ample space to the words of vulgarity. Balram has to begin his narration with the following words in the novel:

> Before we do that, sir, the phrase in English that I learned from my ex-employer the late Mr. Ashok's ex-wife Pinky Madam is: *What a fucking joke* (7).

The philosophy of Karl Marx refers to religion as an opium for the poor, which once taken, becomes a habit and they forget their miseries. The fate of the have-nots is sure to be doomed as the religious institution and belief system has been constructed by the elites to exploit proletariats. Aravind Adiga has been subjected to

bitter criticism by the orthodox people because he dares to expose wrong things of belief and religion. This reality of India has rarely been touched by Indian writers in English, that too with so much vehemence. How can we forget our celebrated reformers like Kabir and Raheem of *Bhakti Yuga* of Hindi literature?

The White Tiger of Adiga has no intention to like or dislike any religion. To him, the sense of humanity is higher than religion. Well if God does exist, He has to have some power to govern the world. So in the passage quoted below Adiga writes with bitter satire:

> 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 (8).

In the above lines, the protagonist has unveiled his ire against the belief of worshiping thousands of Gods, providing priestly class to terrorize the common people. This duplicity forces Balram to leave the portals of religion and to become even a devil to save his skin. He wants to assure his place in the power game by subverting religion. He is speaking his mind to Jiabao:

> He plans it to Jiabao, the Chinese premier:

> I’m no philosopher or poet, how would I know the truth? It's true that all these gods seem to do awfully little work – much like our politicians – and yet keep winning re-election to their golden thrones in heaven, year after year (8).

Michel Foucault objects to the concept of universal rationality; to him human history is not to be a linear progressive development. In fact, factuality of history records only disconnected events. Adiga shows his propensity to explore the power structures that construct the history, which follows zig-zag route. The intention and emotion of Balram are free from the mechanical system of calculation.

The readers meet so many surprises and wonders when Adiga goes on pursuing the narrative technique of progression. The incidents in the story are not based on mere cause and effect relationship. Balram as an individual receives many jolts and snaps of power politics. He self-propels the intensity of thought that oscillates him in-between darkness and light. His honesty, loyalty, and kindness stop him to move on with the reality of the corrupt world and society. The objective world goes on facing turmoil. He was bereft of motherly care in his childhood. His father is only a rickshaw puller to earn him food, shelter and education, bearing all humiliations and hardships.

Misfortune comes unexpectedly and repeatedly. Balram receives a major setback in the name of mercy when he finds his father dying in want of medicine and proper treatment. Balram is only fading up in life as a servant working at a tea stall in his village. The world of darkness is penetrated by a ray of hope, when his mind is impressed by the majestic look of Vijay, the bus conductor, in his Khaki uniform. The tea stall at Laxmangarh opened to him a new way to carry his life in a new direction:

> I wanted to be like Vijay – with a uniform, a pay cheque, a shiny whistle with a piercing sound, and people looking at me with eyes that said, *How important he looks* (31).

By this event his lust for power has a small beginning, when he confesses, "I did my job with near total dishonesty, lack of dedication, and insincerity – and so the tea shop was a profoundly enriching experience." (51). There is, thus, a great shift in the mind of Balram; for him a Gandhian tradition has lost its relevance in present scenario of bitter struggle for power and survival. In fact, Balram has seen the darkness at the faces of men working in that tea shop. Their deplorable and pathetic condition has made him to call them metaphorically as 'human spiders'. The imagery of spider's mechanical move in and around the web, is like that of Balram, doing things mechanically with no interest or innovation:

> Go to a tea shop anywhere along the Ganga, Sir, and look at the men working in that tea shop – men, I say, but better to call them human spiders that go crawling in between and under the tables with rags in their hands, crushed humans in crushed uniforms, sluggish, unshaven, in their thirties or forties or fifties but still 'boys'. But that is your fate if you do your job well–with honesty, dedication, and sincerity, the way Gandhi would have done it, no doubt (51).

The above mentioned quote denotes the ideology of Gandhian thought that remains a myth to him. The unseemly experience that this would-be entrepreneur gets here reveals a new suggestion, a new learning of society he lives in. His mind is impregnated with a bright dream, which can be realized by him only when he rides on the ladder of education he is imparted outside the four cornered campus of his school. Constant pursuit of education through experience of life has been his endeavor:

> Instead of wiping out spots from tables and crushing coals for the oven, I used my time at the tea shop in Laxmangarh to spy on every customer at every table, and overhear everything they said. I decided that this was how I would keep my education going forward – that's the one good thing I'll say for myself. I've always been a big believer in education – especially my own (52).

People in India have always supported the mentality of servitude. Adiga, through this novel, has been successful in exploring master-servant relationship based on power and domination. In this novel, Adiga says:

> Never before in human history have so few owed so much to so many, Mr Jiabao. A handful of men in this country have trained the remaining 99.9 percent – as strong, as talented, as intelligent in every way – 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 (175-176).

The language of the quote above reveals the power of years of regimentation that brainwashed the millions in India to accept the destiny of destitute and darkness. The invention of Balram as a single unique character in the novel to challenge the whole structure of authority cannot be the passion of a common novelist. Adiga has proved himself the rarest of the rare novelists in this sense. His main focus is to inter-relate various expressions of power. The power can be political, economic, physical, religious, or ideological, and may have its experience only when it is resisted.

That resistance is felt at different levels – may be vertically, horizontally, and sometimes quite in an unexpected way. The superstructure of power has its influence on the central point and its flow trickles down to margin or periphery. Adversely, the resistance has the force and propensity that may drive the object on the bottom and then to make it reach on the top. The life of Balram supports the alteration of power. His gesture is directed from small to big, bigger, and finally, the biggest. The small space of his family in Laxmangarh is quite unable to confine and constrain him. It is from the small tea shop of the village that he moves towards the town. He moves up to Delhi, then to Gurgaon, and finally he is to crawl himself into the Silicon Valley of India, called Bangalore.

Balram's struggle goes harsher and harsher by the day. In the very beginning survival was his problem, but later he went on thriving up to the point of becoming an entrepreneur. He has seen his life moving with a rickshaw of his father. Breaking the norm of old tradition, his father picks up rickshaw only to avoid mere servitude. Balram is craving to be a driver like his father, but his ambition grows higher to pick up taxi. He knocks at the doors of every opportunity for achieving his ambition. At first, he has to drive the small Maruti-Suzuki, but later he is blessed with the bigger car, Honda City. Earlier, the protagonist was a job seeker; and now, in Bangalore, he has proved himself a job giver. True, that in this journey of quest for power, he has become selfish and ignored or shown least concern for his relations. This is the price he has to pay for becoming an entrepreneur. None can blame him for being a little selfish in the great rush of rat race.

Balram is not a robotic creation of Adiga. A sensible reader cannot miss the echoes of his palpitating heart. The superpower structure, like police and administration of society, is ready to squeeze the

last drop of blood from him. He is in the list of the most wanted criminal in the record of police, but he knows pretty well that the police cannot reach him anywhere near Bangalore. In the letter to the Premier he is sharing his sensitive feeling about his family. He does not want to look back. He has no desire to go back to the darkness. The world is no longer a mystery for him. He has no guilty consciousness for what he did in the past; anyhow, that past is already dead and buried. He dares not hear the sad story of the merciless and brutal killing of all his near and dear ones at home. He is a changed person; the harshness of experience has transformed him.

In *The White Tiger,* Adiga gives a typical instance of power that circulates through the structure and the politics of power inherent in the very language of narration. The Rooster Coop is used as a key metaphor. Adiga is successful in presenting the gloomy and sad picture of Indian society. It hardly matters whether it is rural or urban society; the Rooster Coop is the captivating force. Those people who are left on the margin, the millions of Indians who once got enslaved, do not seem to resist and question the power because most of them have accepted it as the never ending part of destiny. Living in darkness since long has robbed them of the sense of freedom and joy. The Rooster Coop is symbolic of that confinement, which does not allow the chicks to come out. They are barricaded from all sides to make very narrow space, so that they may not get much strength to flutter their wings. The deplorable condition of the feeble bodies and the hopeless minds of the multitudes of deprived and marginalized Indian gets represented in these words:

> On the wooden desk above this 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.
>
> The very same thing is done with human beings in this country (173-174).

The grisly depiction above with telling effectiveness is the hallmark of the narrative of Adiga. He is a master narrator when he has to match language to describe power politics.

Balram also experiences such a cage-like structure time and again, debarring him from the basic dignity of life. He is one among the millions, who has the touch of what is called unique and extra-ordinary. The prevalent situations threaten him, but he is a courageous person to face the challenge. He fights back, particularly in the later part of his life. In fact, it is said that a dog does not fight rather it is fight in the dog that fights. He has the spirit in him to question the dictates of age-long history because his individual self wants to make a history of his own:

> 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 colored 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 (173).

The above description matches with the horrors of the Nazi camps. The lines reveal to the reader the terrible condition of the victims, who have somehow adjusted themselves to the unjust social system prevailing in this country. The orthodox and capitalistic system has always favoured the rich. The coop-like structure is not merely the specialty of the villages in India, but even the big cities and towns have made it their part. The sufferers are treated as beasts only to cater to the needs of the sophisticated and rich. Balram is sharing his experience in the letter to Mr. Wen Jiabao:

> Watch the roads in the evenings in Delhi; sooner or later you will see a man on a cycle-rickshaw, pedaling down the road, with a giant bed, or a table, tied to the cart that is attached to his cycle. Every day furniture is delivered to people's homes by this man – the deliveryman. A bed costs five thousand rupees, maybe six thousand. Add the chairs, and a coffee table, and it's ten or fifteen thousand. A man comes on a cycle-cart, bringing you this bed, table, and chairs, a poor man who may make five hundred rupees a month. He unloads all this furniture for you, and you give him the money in cash – a fat wad of cash the size of a brick. He puts it into his pocket, or into his shirt, or into his underwear, and cycles back to his boss and hands it over without touching a single rupee of it! A year's salary, two years' salary, in his hands, and he never takes a rupee of it.
>
> Every day, on the roads of Delhi, some chauffeur is driving an empty car with a black suitcase sitting on the backseat. Inside that suitcase is a million, two million rupees; more money than that chauffeur will see in his lifetime. ... Why? ... Why doesn't that servant take the suitcase full of diamonds? He's no Gandhi, he's human, he's you and me. But he's in the

> Rooster Coop. The trustworthiness of servants is the basis of the entire Indian economy. The Great Indian Rooster Coop (174-175).

The Rooster Coop is a form of sinister servitude. Adiga intends to say that the poor and destitute lack the spirit of entrepreneurship in them. That is why, they do not want to come out of it and resist the power of the butcher, who is to tear them off into pieces. The negative force of power has always created havoc in the world of innocence. Ignorance has always suffered at the hands of knowledge and experience. Knowledge speaks of the voice of superiority and has the tendency to dwarf and belittle those who are deprived of it. It speaks the language of suppression and not sublimation. As Leela Gandhi delineates in her book *Postcolonial Theory* (1998) "power is especially corrupting when it comes into contact with knowledge" (75). The novel quotes the famous verse of the poet Iqbal "I was looking for the key for years but the door was always open" (267). The relevance of this quote is that it inspires Balram to break through all the shackles and enter the world of infinity. He has the intensity of the emotional drive to bring a revolutionary change, a complete reversal in his life style.

Balram has an experience of suffering in such a Rooster Coop when the blame of killing a poor child by car driven by Pinky madam is thrust upon him, only to save and protect the mistress of the house where he is earning his livelihood. His innocence and servitude defeat his intelligence and common sense when the matter of his obedience confronts him. He knows that accepting the order of his master is just to throw himself into the world of darkness, but the essential goodness of his heart makes him to accept the situation. The life of a driver in Delhi is presented thus:

> The jails of Delhi are full of drivers who are there behind bars because they are taking the blame for their good, solid middle-class masters. We have left the villages, but the masters still own us, body, soul, and arse. Yes, that's right: we all live in the world's greatest democracy. *What a fucking joke.* Doesn't the driver's family protest? Far from it. They would actually go about bragging. Their boy Balram had taken the fall, gone to Tihar Jail for his employer. He was loyal as a dog. He was the perfect servant. The judges? Wouldn't they see through this obviously forced confession? But they are in the racket too. They take their bribe, they ignore the discrepancies in the case. And life goes on (169).

Balram has to finally break the chains. He is no more ready to bow down in front of any power because he has proved himself more dangerous even than the danger itself. The tradition of society may not give any social respect to him because he has challenged the authority blatantly only because throughout his life he has remained subjected to its savage and cruel rule. Mr. Ashok, his employer, calls him a half-baked person, who

> can read and write, but he doesn't get what he's read. He's half-baked. The country is full of people like him, I'll tell you that. And we entrust our glorious parliamentary democracy' – he pointed at me – 'to characters like these. That's the whole tragedy of this country' (10).

Mr. Ashok, the son of the Stork, is the representative of Western world who has the superfluous touch of democratic values and liberal ideas. He has sympathy for Balram, but the Indian power structure does hold him so tightly that he does not go out of way to help him. The stork, one of the powerful landlords of Laxamangarh, has the final say in the matter of any family decision. Balram, apart

from doing the job of a driver, has to take every pain to look after him. Every day he has to massage his feet in hot water. He has to be at his beck and call. Balram is introduced to Ashok for his weakness and tenderness. Mukesh, whose personality trait has made him to be called, Mongoose, is Mr. Ashok's brother. He has never been generous and friendly to Balram. He treats Balram inhumanly. Pinky, Ashok's American wife, has open mind and she comes to India only for a short while. She wants her husband to go back to America as Ashok had already promised her before coming to India. She was acculturated to New York and its ways of high life. Time and again, she does not leave an opportunity to chide Balram for his minor mistakes also. She has her opinion about him that is very stinging and humiliating. She thinks that Balram is too meek and dumb like a primitive person to speak in front of them. While driving Honda City to Greater Kailash E-231, Balram gets confused as the place was quite new to him. She yells, "I told you not to bring this yokel from the village" (119). It is the language used by the higher strata of society to maintain the superiority over the weaker section. This is part of their power game. As P.D. Nimsarkar (2010) comments:

> The language is here a medium of power dominance, a marker of the social superiority whereby the sense of inferiority is implanted into the poor servants' psyche, perpetuating cultural conflict (93).

There are many references in *The White Tiger* to drive home this point. The language is instrumental in perpetuating dominance over the weak. It has the force to impose restrictions in the name of linguistic propriety. Balram initially submits himself to that power of language. During the course of his misgivings he has to struggle hard to maintain the so- called dignity prescribed by his master.

Pinky humiliates him with these harsh words when he is making ginger tea for her:

> You're so filthy! Look at you, look at your teeth, look at your clothes! There's red *paan* all over your teeth, and there are red spots on your shirt. It's disgusting! Get out – clean up the mess you've made in the kitchen and get out (146).

Balram has no option left for him to defend himself for such weakness that is part of his upbringing in a lower class. It is true that he is not bred in the anglophile surroundings. His English language competence is almost negligible. During the exposure to this language in Delhi, it has added excitement to him but his poor pronunciation of the word 'mall' has made him an object of laughter for Pinky. When he is dressed up as a Maharaja on the occasion of her birthday she laughs at him in derision:

> She laughed and laughed and laughed when she saw me in my costume, bowing low to her with the cardboard box. I served them, and then, as Mr. Ashok had instructed, stood near the portrait of Cuddles and Puddles with folded hands and waited (154).

The reality of the costume and the originality of the status of Balram present a contrast. The literary device, 'hyperbole', is relevant in depicting the situation and reinforcing the fact behind the insignificant existence of Balram in the eyes of Pinky. J.A. Cuddon, in *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (1998), has laconically defined hyperbole as a tool for an "exaggeration for emphasis" (406), Adiga has used this device to prove the dubious status of Balram. The suggestive poverty in the hyperbolic language that Adiga used for Balram clad in the dress of 'Maharaja' is making fun of his poverty. The gloomy feature of the

protagonist is set against the illuminated background of the riches and exuberance. The radical change over that takes place in the appearance of this protagonist is quite unacceptable to the world. Balram must feel guilty for his dress mismatching his fortune. He must mold his persona so that he may fulfil others expectation. As Jean Paul Satre writes: "I am possessed by the Other; the Other's look fashions my body in its nakedness, causes it to be born, sculptures it, produces it as it is, sees it as I shall never see it. The other holds a secret-the secret of what I am" (31). The 'Being' in Balram gets stimulated to move towards 'Becoming'. The deprivation or gap in him is to be filled up.

The grammatical rules imposed by the powerful must be accepted. The prosperity can meet the destiny of the destitute only if he has enough fight in him to regain what is denied by society. Balram must come to the level of raising himself above the murky imposition of society. Here is the will power in this hero to fight all odds. He tries to correct himself for apt pronunciation. Here is the struggle for decent and proper language in him that shows his will power. He closes his eyes to practice it in rapt attention. He further strains up to pronounce the word 'Pizza' in a proper way in absence of both the master and mistress of the house when he is washing the dishes in the kitchen:

> 'Pijja.'
> 'Pzijja.'
> 'Zippja.'
> 'Pizja.' (155)

His concentration shows his urge to master the language of the rich and, through it, master the 'master' himself. He wants to become like Ashok, a symbol of language driven power for him. In this context, Ulka Anjaria (2015) argues:

> In Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008), Ashok, Balram's boss, has lived in the United States; therefore, unlike the rest of his family, he wears different cloths, knows the correct pronunciation of 'pizza' and is slightly more liberal than his brother in his treatment of his driver (13).

Language is the outcome of superior culture and mastering. It is bound to make a man look higher in hierarchy, and by imitating Ashok, Balram wants to scale up his status. The facility of language having the force of economic and political power has always been denied to the people, who have been victimized and impoverished. The very heart of the standardization of language speaks volumes about the sinister politics played by power mongers. Manners, etiquette, standard and culture have all been structured and constructed by the elites only to dwarf the already dwarfed image of the poor in our society. The dark is dark simply because it has not seen the light, or light has been denied to it. There is a Sanskrit *Sloka* that says *Tamso Maa Jyotirgamaya*, which means that the speaker intends to move from the world of darkness to the world of light. Adiga uses "Light" and "Darkness" repeatedly in the novel to emphasize this paradoxical setup. Here is the use of strong metaphors by him:

> India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my country. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well off. But the river brings darkness to India – the black river. Which black river am I talking of – which river of Death, whose banks are full of rich, dark, sticky mud whose grip traps everything that is planted in it, suffocating and choking and stunting it? Why, I am talking of Mother Ganga, daughter of the Vedas, river of illumination, protector of us all, breaker of the chain of birth

> and rebirth. Everywhere this river flows, that area is the Darkness (14-15).

The dualities and dialectics are the phenomena that are parts of the knowledge in this universe. Here is the interplay of light and darkness to narrate the dichotomy of Indian situation:

> Sometimes, in my apartment, I turn on both chandeliers, and then I lie down amid all that light, and I just start laughing. A man in hiding, and yet he's surrounded by chandeliers!
>
> There – I'm revealing the secret to a successful escape. The police searched for me in darkness: but I hid myself in light (118).

Nobody likes the darkness but only the ill fate of a man holds him in the pitch of it. The man of action does not stop making a fight against it. Here, it is the world of light that has compelled him to get into introspection. The series of questions cropping up in Balram's mind is worth noticing:

> Why had my father never told me not to scratch my groin? Why had my father never taught me to brush my teeth in milky foam? Why had he raised me to live like an animal? Why do all the poor live amid such filth, such ugliness? (151).

Mr. Ashok has a flaw in his character that is to be considered as a very serious one that dooms his personality in the eyes of his ever loyal servant, Balram. The corruption in the coalmines at Dhanbad and his indulgence in unfair deal with the corrupt ministers in Delhi is witnessed by Balram. The red bag filled with money permanently spoils the mind of Balram against his master. Hypocrisy, duplicity, and corruption have been ingrained in Ashok;

they begin to infect Balram too. Like Ashok he wants to succeed at any cost, so fed up he becomes with his proper ways. Throughout a sufferer and victim of darkness, his mind is tilted towards the so-called world of light, where corruption rules the roost. He knows that honesty and loyalty can never help him to reach the peak of success.

Still, the binary of good and bad, small and big, innocence and cunningness, honesty and dishonesty persists and keeps him hovering between two opposites. This checks him from becoming a hard core businessman. Balram, though aware of the tricks of the business, still relies on common intelligence and good sense. True it is that the most heinous and diabolical crime Balram commits by killing his master, his success story as an entrepreneur is marked by good works also. He has to bid goodbye to all his past associations, but he brings his nephew back from his village to Bangalore to educate him. Balram also starts a school for the downtrodden children; may be some of them eventually may turn out white tigers.

Balram shows his contempt for the prevalent socio-political condition in India which has got corrupted. All the machinery of the government is polluted. The politicians and media join hand together in making the show of things which they do not intend. They are hypocrites and hidden criminals. Balram comes to Bangalore-the model city of India, that yells much about prosperity and development. He finds the gloomy picture of the city that talks a different reality than the claimed one. In his letter to Jiabao, he opens the secret of this city in these words:

> *…the chief minister of the state today announced a plan to eliminate malnutrition in Bangalore in six months. He declared that there would be not one hungry child in the city*

> *by the end of the year. All officials are to work single-mindedly toward this goal, he declared. Five hundred million rupees will be allocated for malnutrition eradication* (291).

Balram is well aware of these tall talks finally vanishing into thin air. This is how metros are claimed to be heaven on earth, hiding the terrible reality of the slums. Another similar high-sounding claim is made by the Finance Minister, "*…the finance minister declared that this year's budget will include special incentives to turn our villages into high-technology paradises…*" (*ibid.*). In fact, the language and media are busy feeding such type of good news for the weaker, subaltern, marginalized, sick and deprived. While big-wigs are corrupt and hypocrites, Balram still keeps his essential conscience with him. Although a rich man finally, he does not crave for power and, therefore, does not play the dirty politics:

> I am not a politician or a parliamentarian. Not one of those extraordinary men who can kill and move on, as if nothing had happened. It took me four weeks in Bangalore to calm my nerves. …every morning at eight and walked around with a bag full of cash in my hands for four hours (I dared not leave it in the hotel room) before returning for lunch. Dharam and I ate together. What he did to keep himself amused in the mornings I don't know, but he was in good spirits. This was the first holiday he had had in his whole life. His smiles cheered me up (295).

This new place brings some new change in him so that he may get well adapted to Bangalore. He has to justify a tiger in him—a White Tiger, indeed. First of all, he has to be a respondent of the peculiarities of the town. He applies his intelligence when he says:

> Now I had to make a living in Bangalore – I had to find out how I could fit into this city. I tried to hear Bangalore's voice, just as I had heard Delhi's (297).

The city is being explored as a hub of outsourcing companies in India that is being exploited by the Americans over the phone. He keenly observes the flow of "... real estate, wealth, power, sex" (298). He decides his entrepreneurship to be part of this outsourcing. He wants to do business with helpless people of Bangalore to whom the light of the city is always denied and who are compelled to live in this jungle like animals:

> And I thought, *That's it. That's how I fit in*. Let me explain, Your Excellency. See, men and women in Bangalore live like the animals in a forest do. Sleep in the day and then work all night, until two, three, four, five o'clock, depending, because their masters are on the other side of the world, in America. Big question: how will the boys and girls – girls especially – get from home to the workplace in the late evening and then get back home at three in the morning? There is no night bus system in Bangalore, no train system like in Mumbai. The girls would not be safe on buses or trains anyway. The men of this city, frankly speaking, are animals. That's where entrepreneurs come in (298).

Balram explores ample opportunity left there for him. He focuses on providing services to the helpless office goers, and for this he decides to rent the cars from the dealers directly. From driving a car, now he deals in cars. He has to fight the old instinct of driver in him when he comes to meet Toyota Qualis dealers in the city. The language of the servant automatically comes out of his mouth when he proposes the dealer; "I want to drive your cars" (298). Now as it suits a transformed entrepreneur in Balram, the

correction soon comes: “I want to *rent* your cars” (299). At first, he is a social entrepreneur, who develops friendship with such people in Bangalore whose background enjoys power and status. He is proud of having so many friends in the city, and so he has to invite Jiabao with these words:

> What would Mr. Ashok do? I wondered. Then it hit me. I wasn't alone—I had someone on my side! I had thousands on my side! You'll see my friends when you visit Bangalore – fat, paunchy men swinging their canes, on Brigade Road, poking and harassing vendors and shaking them down for money. I'm talking of the police, of course (299).

Balram bribes the police inspector to get his support. The police station still has the poster with his photo identity supplemented by inscription ‘WANTED’. He has been successful in establishing company named ‘White Tiger Drivers.’ He offers the service of this company to a nice woman without getting any obstruction or objection from the police. Balram has called it ‘start-up’ which has “grown into a big business” (301). He has opened a website to promote his business. Now, he is in a position to make an appeal to the Chinese Premier:

> I was one of the drivers in the early days, but then I gave up. I don't really think I ever enjoyed driving, you know? Talking is much more fun. Now the start-up has grown into a big business. ... See for yourself at my website. See my motto: ‘We Drive Technology Forward.’ In *English!* See the photos of my fleet: twenty-six shining new Toyota Qualises, all fully air-conditioned for the summer months, all contracted out to famous technology companies. If you like my SUVs, if you want your call-center boys and girls driven home in style, just click where it says: CONTACT ASHOK SHARMA NOW!

(301). Yes, Ashok! That's what I call myself these days. ... All of them belong to me – Munna, whose destiny was to be a sweet-maker! You'll see photos of my boys too. All sixteen of them (302).

In the above mentioned extract from the novel the politics and power of language smells much strongly, particularly the expression '*in English*' suggests attraction and sophistication. The world of business is unique and different from others only because Balram has given shape to it. Here in this world the glaze of light is not that much oppressive. This world is the outcome of the suffering of pains, pangs, and humiliations of society. The protagonist unlocks his anguished heart in these words:

> Once I was a driver to a master, but now I am a master of drivers. I don't treat them like servants – I don't slap, or bully, or mock anyone. I don't insult any of them by calling them my 'family', either. They're my employees, I'm their boss, that's all. ... Now, despite my amazing success story, I don't want to lose contact with the places where I got my real education in life (302).

Life and business never follow straight line. So many ups and downs meet them. A very serious jolt this entrepreneur receives when his driver, named Mohammad Asif, hits a boy with his vehicle while taking the girls home. The boy is dead and his relatives want Asif to be punished by the police. Balram, very tactfully, saves the driver by using his power. His magnanimity and generosity is obvious when he helps the family of the deceased. Those critics, who have shown very little concern for Balram and accused him much for his heartless killing of Mr. Ashok, should see such generosity in his character to modify their opinion. Balram does not want to look back. Even if he has got distracted, deviated or

delinked, he does not want to repent for it. The tattered clothes of poverty, deprivation, humiliation, and subjugation he has already put off to give way to riches, affluence, and power. He has no shame or feeling of guilt for what he did to Mr. Ashok. It was all a small price that Balram has to pay to forge ahead from a shameful life. Killing of Ashok was a necessary ritual in the power game.

The truth of the capitalistic growth in India keeps within its womb the story of assassination and brutality. Balram seeks a new judgment, the judgment that is based on neither bias nor favour to him. Balram's is a saga of internal and external transformation, an outcome of his journey from a half-baked lower caste Indian boy to a successful business entrepreneur. He receives nomenclatures first as Munna, secondly as Balram, thirdly as White Tiger, fourthly a half-baked person, fifthly a Country mouse, sixthly a thinking man, and finally Mr. Ashok Sharma, the entrepreneur. The last name he has given to himself shows his self-confidence and his lingering respect for his late master.

This journey Balram undertakes only to make a story of his own in the prevalent hypocritical, socio-political condition of Indian society whose language and power has always denied the existence of man like him. The story of *The White Tiger* opens a new area of exploration which is on the road map of language as used in the interpretation of power politics. The language articulated by the protagonist from the beginning of the narration till the point where it ends, gets intertwined with the politics of power. Balram is the centre of attraction for the reader from the very beginning to the concluding part of the novel. Not only his character but his language too changes with the growing years and growing status. The language used in the novel is well adapted to the real situation depicted by the novelist. The style of the

presentation of the facts and situations does not reflect any effort from the side of the author, and so it can be concluded that the power politics of society is well expressed through an apt language.

The above discourse has made it explicitly clear that the novel deals with the realities of crisis and conflict in the life of poor Balram. The phenomena of crisis and conflict have been presented through the Gramscian model of hegemony, and Foucauldian notion of power. The realities of imperialism, colonialism, and exploitation could have been realized as living possibilities because they have exercised themselves upon history, language, and culture. Aravind Adiga has negotiated with the possibilities of linguistic dominance and he writes this novel to highlight the hidden possibility of dominance and control through language. His experimentations with language can be seen at phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels. David Crystal in his "Mother Tounge India," (2005) argues:

> Linguistic status is always a reflection of power-political, technological, economic, cultural, religious ... -so this is really a question relating to the future of India as a world player (2).

To free a language of past imperialism is to decolonize a culture, literature, and the self of the human beings. Adiga nativises or Indianises his language by introducing certain words of Hindi language. The insertion of Hindi words into English sentences represents the shift from powerful to powerless, from status to commonplace. Some of the linguistic examples are given below:

1. Using words for specific reasons, which include stressing a sound: "Pri-va-see" (207).

2. The use of Indian words with English spellings: It represents the process of side-tracking the imperial model of English language and bringing a new form of language which may unsettle the hegemonic form of it. For example, "*namastes*" (4), "*namaste*" (9), "*sadhus*" (15), "*ghat*" (16, 18), "Hanuman" (19), "*daal*", "*rotis*" (33), "*thug*!" (52), "*Halwais*", "*gulab jamuns*" (63), "*laddoos*" (65), "*pacca*" (129), "*mandala*" (207). "Mukeshan" (240), "*Khaki*" (67), "*dosa*", "*dhal*" (238), "*lassi*" (239).

3. Making unusual compound words to assert local identity:
   a) Open compounds: (spelled as two words) "yellow man"(5), "brown man" (5, 7), "half formed", "half digested", "half correct" (11), "tea shop" (24), "blue safari suit" (33), "Nepali woman" (58), "'English' liquor", "'Indian' liquor", "country hooch" (72), "'Chinese' liquor" (73), "green bed" (233), "golden hair" (233), "red bag" (243-4-6), "black eyes" (244), "red puddles" (246), "Rooster Coop" (248). "foreign girl", "Nepali girl" (250).
   b) Closed compounds: (joined to form a single word), "aftershave", "fruitlike" (9), "potbellied" (13), "backsides", "landlords" (25, 63), "backbreaking", "sticklike" (27), "Goldsmiths" (63), "Bullshit" (89), "clawlike" (273), "ladybirds" (273), "rainwater" (286).
   c) Hyphenated compounds: Where two words are joined by a hyphen. Sometimes, more than two words can form a compound.

      "Half-Baked" (10), "half-cooked", "half-formed" (11), "rikshaw-puller" (13, 23), "daughter-in-law" (16), "blue-movie" (23), "pale-skinned" (17), "light-skinned" (58), "slant-eyed" (59), "sweet-maker" (63), "face-to-

face", "half-baked" (207), "non-virgin" (228), "Country-mouse" (228), "Green-haired" (232), "Working-class" (233), "high-pitched" (234), "clankety-clank" (247), "jeep-taxi" (250), "letter-writer" (277), "glass-and-steel", "*first-gear*" (319).

4. Hyphenated sentence: It interrogates the classical pattern of syntactic structures:

   "O Lamb-that-was-born-from-the-loins-of-a-landlord." (155), "one-hand-on-the-wheel-one-hand-with-the-whiskey-bottle" (215), "your-fortune-and-weight-for-one-rupee" (247).

5. Code-mixing and Code-switching: Mr. Ashok and Pinky Madam speak code "– mixing Hindi and English language together" (47).

   "*paan*-and-spit" (29), "*pacca* servant" (129), "*paan*-chewing" (200), "potato *vada*" (204), "chewing *paan*" (246), "*paan*-maker" (250), "wet *paan* leaf" (251), "Chew *paan*", "*paan* leaf", "*paan*-seller" (251).

6. Reduplication:

   "nitwit" (59) "hanky-panky" (129), "goody-goody" (201), "wipe wipe" (226), "here's...here's..." (258).

7. Use of italics for emphasis on some part of a sentence or a full sentence:

   "*That's not how the rich think, you moron. Haven't you learned yet?*" (206), "*Speak to me of civil war*", "*I will*", "*Speak to me of blood on the streets*,", "*I will*," (220), "*entrepreneur*", "*How much can I get from an American for this in 2010?*" (319), "*I've* made i*t! I've broken out of the coop!*" (320).

8. Adiga's own phrases: The most celebrated phrase is "The Rooster Coop". Some of the critics have started using it as a theoretical phrase in their criticism. Another examples are as follows:

   "The White Tiger" (3), "A Thinking Man" (3), "The Buffalo", "The Stork" (24), the "Wild Boar", "The Raven" (25),"half-baked" (207), "Country-mouse" (228, 231), "Rooster Coop" (248), "The Great Socialist" (269), "Boss of Bangalore" (319).

9. Capitalized Words:

   i) At initial positions:
   "Black Fort" (40), "Buckingham B Block" (139), "Darkness" (269), "The Great Socialist" (269), "the Darkness" (269), "Johnnie Walker Black" (271), "new India", "New Bangalore" (318)

   ii) All capitals within the passages:
   "DRIVER BALRAM REPORT AT ONCE TO THE DOOR. NO DELAY. YOUR MASTER WANTS YOU" (203). "DRIVER BALRAM, WHERE ARE YOU" (202).

10. Question tags:

    "Balram. You'll need some money, won't you?" (258).

11. The contradictions and paradoxes:

    "The Light and The Darkness" (251), "*two* countries – two Indias" (251). "Men with Big Bellies, and Men with Small Bellies" (64), "... two destinies: eat – or get eaten up." (64).

12. Short, but full sentence:

"Brush. Spit. Brush."

"Brush. Spit. Brush." (151).

13. Slangs:

"sister-fucker" (57), "*fucking*" (240), "fuck" (261).

14. Acronyms:

"ITC" (31), "FIR" (32), "CBI", "DP", "SHO" (39), "TV" (139), PVR (203), "A/C" (209), "DLF" (229), "TB" (237), "CD" (240).

In nutshell, this chapter interrogates power politics and suitable, even if unconventional, language to express the same. Time is a great change maker. From imperial hangover and traces of feudalism, the social structure in Indian has been undergoing a change articulated by the poor section of society. For this new change, a new language is needed that has been amply applied by Adiga in *The White Tiger*. Matter and manner of its expression are beautifully blended in *The White Tiger* to show dominance, submission, protest, anger etc. The powerful have won many battles in history; it is now time for courageous writers to write about small battles won by the poor and the helpless. *The White Tiger* fulfils this task quite effectively.

Chapter 4

Another Story of Power Game in Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*

"They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented." – K. Marx

The current chapter aims at analyzing the second novel of Adiga, *Last Man in Tower* (2011). This chapter attempts at linking the conceptual problems of power politics with its related language. The novel depicts the gigantic struggle of an old Masterji against the mighty power of money of a capitalist, who can do anything to achieve his aim of converting Vishram Society into a huge multi-storey centre for a purely commercial venture. Masterji has no resources to fight such an unequal game except that though pigmy before his odds, he has mountain of a moral strength. He has to lose many things including his life, but the divine intervention comes in the form of people's realisation of his noble fight and values, and the opening of a school for children in the same campus of the demolished Vishram Society.

Aravind Adiga writes: "The most patriotic thing a creative artist can do is challenge people to see their country as it is." (2) Adiga's present novel exposes his countryman to the sinister side of money and muscle power of the estate business in metros, in this case, that of Mumbai. The novel is, thus, full of darkness. The only glimmering light is the towering resolve of the lone man, Masterji, to wage a moral battle in the face of innumerable odds. And despite all the gloom pervading the pages of the novel, his lost battle wins in the form of realization of his people, once opposed to him, and finally accepting his viewpoint that matter is not all, spirit is the final essence.

The novel raises many socio-political questions regarding the one-sided infrastructural growth of the country. Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam in *World Literature Today* (2017), explains this dilemma:

> Adiga's work seems to be haunted by a Dickensian ghost. The million-dollar question that he grapples with is whether India's progress is all-inclusive, whether her development has brought happiness to all, and whether her smart cities are also socially and morally sound cities. Adiga seems to conclude that Indians today live in a scary spiritual void wherein painful absurdity has become the price of progress (3).

Tracing the theme of power politics in this novel is largely similar to the previous two novels; *The God of Small Things* and *The White Tiger*. The modern materialistic world pushes person backward by wrongly judging that material success is everything in life. Those after this principle are blatantly cruel, inhuman persons. This has its roots in the capitalistic, bourgeois society, supplemented by the greedy, commercial culture of Mumbai. Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee (2015) accepts the depiction of "Mumbai" in *Last Man in Tower* as "infrastructural violence" (295). There is a telling contrast between the names of Mumbai and Bombay. In an interview; Aravind Adiga has referred to A. R. Venkatachalapathy's (2006) book, *Chennai not Madras: Perspectives on the City*. Adiga, in the present novel, explains Mumbai as an ancient Indian "city of immense possibilities"; and Bombay as symbol of crass materialism and vulgar show of power. Mumbai, *Mumba* – the goddess derives from Sanskrit and *ai* – mother in Marathi, is a traditional name for the colonial place and post-colonial name Bombay. It is compared with the "D-word" (222); one can add three more Ds: Diarrhoea, Diabetes, and Drugs. Or, is it the displacement of people in the cruel name of redevelopment? The infrastructural violence results into illogical development in the name of

"redevelopment" (78), especially, within Vishram Societies, Tower A and Tower B.

People are upset and are angry against sudden development; Masterji encashes this resentment and forms a group of dissidents and becomes their leader. Masterji, Yogesh A. Murthy, a sixty-one-year-old distinguished emeritus teacher (41), protests against "*unplanned* development" (355) and openly opposes the turning of Vishram Society, Tower A, into Confidence Shanghai (60) or, (an Indian) Shanghai, or at least half-Shanghai (354). Aravind Adiga is a critic of luxury at the cost of poor population. But the luxury here, in the novel, becomes a "super-luxury" (60). Adiga questions the readers, if luxury or super-luxury is needed? What is the fate of the nearby, dense Mumbai's slums in Vakola, Santa Cruz? Is luxury or super-luxury essential in terms of life, survival, or needs of residents of "two distinct Societies enclosed within the same compound wall" (4). And is that true for the "one-fourth of the city's slums" (3)? The residents of 'Vishram Society A' oppose its naming as "Illusion! Illusion!" (78): "This is an illusion. You must understand that. The money will never come" (74). Adiga has tried to answer all related questions in the 'Epilogue: Murder and Wonder'. Here, Adiga shows that Vishram Society, though "the old Remington" (14) and "an old-fashioned building" (6) serve an "example of Good Housing for Good Indians" (4).

Vishram Society is happy in "unimpeachably *pucca*" (3) building, which is their home rather than house or building; where they have their own democratic system – *sansad* - parliament (21). It allows its residents to sit in white plastic chairs (9) during its sessions (21). They have to face many types of power games caused by too much tyranny, struggle, the inner conflicts within the Society, and outer struggles with the Confidence Group founder, Dharmen Vrijesh Shah. It comes in the form of Shah's brazen resolve to have his way with the residence at any cost. He wants to

convince them by logic, then by temptation, and finally by coercion to exchange their flats for new apartments.

But the toughest resistance to his plan comes from supposedly an old harmless master. Yogesh A Murthy, the teacher is made of a sterner stuff. He proves to be a modern tragic figure, towering over so called greats like Dharmen Shah. *Last Man in Tower* is a story of power struggle based on greed for new apartments. The villain of the piece is Dharmen Shah, who manipulates the minds of the residents of Vishram Society by his "general offer of redevelopment" (78); so that they may willingly agree to exchange their flats, and shift to the new apartments to be built by Mr Shah on that ground. His manipulation is so crafty that turns neighbours against neighbours for the purpose of their space in the dream project of Mr Shah. Randy Boyagoda (2011) has summed up Adiga's concerns in the novel, as: "a set of concerns around questions of virtue and vice, power and punishment, ambition and abjection, honour and humiliation, in a place – present-day Mumbai – where the stark differences between such pairings are so boldly on display that you can't help but admire someone's decision to take a stand against it all, especially when someone else, when it seems like everyone else, tries to take him down for it" (1). The novel begins with Shah, a developer and a creator of estates and a very cunning business man. A voracious eater, he is a bulky and ungainly man. He looks Devil Incarnate, though outwardly he is very sophisticated. Like many rich men, Shah has also an eye on young girls like Rosie, Nannu, Smita. He tries to exploit them physically with the promise of roles in new films.

Shah himself has thought the old teacher to be very pliable, but the teacher turned out much more determined in not leaving his flat; but Shah was bent on getting all the flats, and pull them down for his new commercial venture. He sends his assistant, Shanmugham, to hunt for all the information about that property and the property owners. He then offers a fabulous sum to each of them, a hopping 330,000 dollars, an amount that

none of the residents even dreamt of. Shanmugham reports it to Mr Shah, "There is only one teacher, sir. And he *is* one of those saying no" (118). And further Shah has asked Shanmugham to note down it in his black book. Yet, Yogesh A. Murthy refuses to take the bait. For him money was less important than the memories of his past life with his dead daughter and wife. Pulling down his flat means erasing large part of those memories. His life would have than turned into a listless affair. Masterji had some die-hard supporters initially. One was blind, Mrs Pinto, who has memorised the layout of the Society. In a new setup both she and her family would be nervous, how she would cope-up with all the changes. Another was Mrs Rego, who does not trust the developer like cunning Shah; thus, she is very unwilling to accept the money. Mr Kudwa wants to show off and does not want to look greedy by accepting the money without fuss. He is also apprehensive of the present and the new neighbours. Boosted up by these few, Masterji is bold enough to assert:

> *Vishram Society Tower A is my home, and it:*
>
> *Will not be sold*
> *Will not be leased or rented*
> *Will not be redeveloped* (262)

Masterji takes the support of the police, law, media, and even his students to prevent Mr Shah to take over his flat. But most of them are bought over one by one by the money of Shah. In this way, Masterji's courage and confidence fail in the face of corrupt ways of Shah. When his lawyer is won over by the corrupt money of Shah, he tries to convince Masterji to take the offer. But Masterji Protests: "How can *you* make a settlement without speaking to me? I have the share certificate: I own my flat" (282). Here is how the conversation between Masterji and his lawyer goes on:

> 'I don't want a better settlement,'

'We'll get you the *best* settlement.'

'I want *no* settlement. I will find another lawyer.'

'Now, Masterji, Mr Parekh leaned in to him. 'The others will ask for a retainer and waste your time and tell you the same. Frankly, sir: I don't understand what it is you want.'

'I keep telling you: *nothing*.' (284)

Even when every individual and institution fail Masterji, he still keeps his faith and moral uprightness. With the active support and machination of Shah, the residents plot against Masterji. The residents are desperate to get their money and move to their new apartments. So they attack Masterji, making him unconscious first and then throwing him down from the rooftop. Later on, when the residents get their apartments and are full of fun and frolic, even then their guilty conscience bites them time and again for murdering an upright man like Masterji. As a fitting memoriam to the memory of Masterji, a school is started in the campus of the new apartments. Thus, the novel can be summed up as a relentless fight of a man not only against a builder, but against his own times. The novel has tragic dimension and Masterji assumes the role of a tragic hero in the context of contemporary situation in big cities.

Vishram Tower A's small *sansad*–this replica of parliament has its function at the ground floor in front of the window of 0C in the Society. It served as a democratic window to the Society. The flat 0C belongs to a resident named Mrs. Felicia Saldanha, who lives with her daughter, Radhika. The window of this flat functions as multi-task job; sometimes as a place for the speaker of this parliament, other time works as a keen observer, and most of the time supplies refreshments to the 'parliamentarians'. Aravind Adiga describes the parliament of Vishram Society A:

> What the residents called their *sansad* – parliament – was now in session. White plastic chairs had been arranged around the entrance of Tower A, right in front of Mrs Saldanha's kitchen, an arrangement that allowed those seated a glimpse, through an almond-shaped tear in the green kitchen curtain, of a small TV. The first 'parliamentarians' were about to sit on the plastic chairs, which would remain occupied until water returned to the building (21).

This tiny but effective parliament has its functions to meet the requirements of the residents of this Society. It calls special meeting on 28 April on the theme of "Emergency nature of repairs" (8). The secretary of the building types the notices on Remington typewriter. Other residents raise the issue of corruption, as the secretary himself is found involved in it. There is some anger in this matter and it is raised in the parliament. For the transparency in such matters, the residents have encouraged themselves to make an expenditure note and register: "No-Argument book – a notebook in which every financial transaction between them had been faithfully recorded" (66).

The power politics moves around Vishram Society, even in every session of the "plastic-chair parliament" (95). The 3 B resident, Ms Meenakshi is the "most unsatisfactory single woman" (15) about twenty-five years. She is a Public Relation Journalist and lives on rent, and its owner is Shiv Hiranandani. Society has put an allegation on Meenakshi of having a boyfriend (164). Masterji hurts her boyfriend, which makes Meenakshi scream. This finally makes so complex an affair that this is brought to the parliament. The discussion there is quoted below:

> 'There is a boy who goes into and comes out of that room with her,' Masterji conceded. He turned to the Secretary. 'But she works, doesn't she?'
>
> 'Journalist.'

> ‘Those people are known for their number two activities,’ Mrs Puri said.
>
> ‘She seems to me, though I have only seen her from a distance, a decent girl.’
>
> Masterji continued, his voice gaining authority from the echoes of ‘sun, moon, eclipse, physics’ … All proved to be good people when given a chance. Now, young people, unmarried girls, they should also be given a chance. We don’t want to become a building full of retirees and blind people. If this girl and her boyfriend have done something inappropriate, we should speak to them. However,…’ He looked at Mrs Puri. ‘… we have no business with her rubbish.’
>
> Mrs Puri winced. She wouldn’t tolerate this kind of talk from anyone else (26).

Aravind Adiga specifies the case in the words of Mrs Sangeeta Puri, “Mrs Puri was not one to pry – not one to ask what was happening within the privacy of a neighbour’s four walls – but when the condoms come tumbling on to your doorstep, well, then!” (22-23). This gives a small idea of power politics in the Society. But the main focus always remains Dharmen Shah’s clout to buy the Society for his commercial greed and the opposition of Masterji to negate that plan.

This “plastic-chair parliament” has raised the issues of all types. Sometimes, this parliament asks an especial invitee from Tower B. Ms. Ritika, an old college mate of Mrs. Puri, has come with a “big news” (36). The news is truly big in its sense of money. A Muslim man, for his one-room hut, gets an “astronomical offer” (37) of eighty-one lakh rupees from another rival, the Ultimex Group. The small parliament is wonder-struck with this huge amount.

The game of power politics by this semi-authorised lawmaker of plastic chaired parliament is played against Masterji. The parliament puts pressure

on Masterji to sign the offer with a protest. This is done for the sole aim of fulfilling their greed of becoming a millionaire in Mumbai. However, Adiga himself has explained this as "Four or Five Seconds of Feeling Like a Millionaire" (121). Rest of the parliamentarians, except Masterji, has passed an informal resolution and called him names, sweetener, threatening, frightened, push him from the terrace, *kala paani*, and so on. The residents of Vishram Society, need his signature for satisfying their lust for money and luxury. The residents have tried all sorts of repressive state apparatuses, but all in vain. They have pressurised Masterji to sign the bill, to accept the offer. But Masterji is determined not to do anything against his "principle". He is successful, but by walking out of the session of the parliament. He becomes a *Satyagrahi* like Gandhiji. He has opened his inner and outer window to accept new changes, fresh air, to save the old traditions and norms, to save the Vishram Society, and the "grandmotherly building" (4). This power politics has been penned down by Adiga, as:

> Ibrahim Kudwa stood behind her [Mrs Puri]: 'Sign Mr Shah's agreement now, Masterji. Sign it now.'
>
> 'I will not be made to change my mind like this,' Masterji said. 'So shut up, Ibrahim.' Kudwa tried to respond, then sagged, and stepped back.
>
> Moving him aside, Ajwani stepped forward. The Secretary came from the other direction. Shouts – people poked Masterji – someone pushed. 'Sign it now!'
>
> Ajwani turned and cursed. Mrs Saldanha's waste water pipe was discharging right on to his foot. 'Turn the tap off, Sal-dan-ha!' he shouted.
>
> 'Have!' she shouted back, but the water still flowed, like a statement on the violence in parliament. The dirty water separated the crowd; from the stairwell, there came a barking – the old stray

dog rushed out – the Secretary had to move, and Masterji ran up the stairs.

As he bolted the door behind him, he could hear Mrs Pinto's voice: 'No, please don't go up. Please, be civilized!' (260)

Language like, dirty water, barking old stray dog, is indicative of fierce power struggle in the Society. Running so furiously up the stairs and shutting the door in the face of the opponents shows both physical and moral strength of Masterji.

The old windows are the windows to new dreams. For builder Shah, Vishram Tower B's windows may open new dreams. They are carrying their 'present' in the "truck" (330) for their new future at another place. The windows, balconies, and grilles of Vishram Tower B have also served purpose; after that that building is "marked for demolition" (331). The last residents of Tower B leave and "left ghost-shadows around the windows and balconies" and the security grills had been removed like "eyebrows plucked in a painful ceremony. Pigeons flew in and out of the rooms, now no one's rooms, just the spent cartridges of old dreams" (331). The language above is expressive of the painful way of shifting, which is not only physical but emotional too. Thus, physical dislocation and shifting sentiments go side by side.

Adiga's artistic quality has its evidence in the depiction of windows, in the opening pages of the novel, *Last Man in Tower*:

> Every flat has iron grilles on the windows: geraniums, jasmines, and the spikes of cacti push through the rusty metal squares. Luxuriant ferns, green and reddish green, blur the corners of some windows, making them look like entrances to small caves (5).

The description of ferns and flowers is indicative of the harmonious old living before demolition came into picture.

For Dharmen Shah, window is indicative of the future of his own growth to make Vishram Societies, A and B into a super-luxury residential project. As Adiga depicts in an apt form: “Shah, with hands massaging his belly, grinned. ‘Real estate.’ He stayed by the window” (52). Here, bulging belly, grinning, and dreaming for the future, simultaneously point to the strange person that Shah is. All his small and big actions and attitudes, point to an all engrossing, obsessive thought of Shah, to accumulate more and more wealth. Property is his lifeline, and less of it his death.

There is an incident of Shah living in Versova flat with Rosie as assistant. Shah orders her to give him toast with lots of butter. He has employed her with dubious intention-to use her in daily chores and misuse her in future to hobnob with politicians to curry their favour. Shah has future plans of sending her to politician with bags full of black money and fair complexioned girls. Shah tells it in his own words: “I’ll bring you a model of the Shanghai, Rosie. It’s so beautiful, you should see it. Gothic, Italian, Indian, Art Deco styles, all in one. My whole life story is in it” (91), But Rosie does not agree to her misuse. This shows the inclination of Shah to use / misuse a thing to the maximum, getting the utmost for the money spent on it. He becomes obsessive to snatch the land at a throwaway price and get maximum return from it. Like Rosie he had employed two more girls- Smita and Nannu for almost the same purpose. For him nothing matters than material gains, because he has no moral scruples.

Masterji sees the sea of immense possibilities for the benefit of all mankind whereas Shah has almost insane ideas to enjoy the luxury of expanse of the land, ocean and open sky. Shah used to purchase the land from the slum areas and many other registered and incorporated housing societies to rebuild them for futuristic skyscrapers. The following paragraphs have depicted Aravind Adiga’s skills in using suitable words apt for the situation:

… a window answers: banyan, maidan, stone, tile, tower, dome, sea, hawk, *amaltas* in bloom, smog on the horizon, gothic phantasmagoria (Victoria Terminus and the Municipal Building) emerging from the smog.

Dharmen Shah watches the hawk. It has been hovering outside the window, held aloft by a mysterious current – a thrashing of sunlit wings – and it is on the sill. In its claws a mouse, or a large part of one. Entrails wink out of grey fur: a ruby inside ore. A second later, another hawk is also on the sill.

Opening the window, Shah leaned out as far as he could: the two birds were flying in a vindictive whirl around each other. The dead mouse, left behind on the sill, was oozing blood and grease.

Shah's mouth filled with saliva. He had eaten a packet of milk biscuits in the past twelve hours. …

Shah looked down. On the road directly below the window, a woman was talking on a mobile phone. He craned his neck to see what she was wearing below her waist.

'It's a girl, isn't it, Dharmen?'…

'That's the only thing that would get your neck out of the window' (51).

On one hand, Shah thinks of banyan, maidan, stone, tile, tower, dome, sea, *amaltas* in bloom, gothic phantasmagoria and, on the other hand, he is attracted by hovering hawk, a mouse in its claws, entrails winking out of a grey fur, oozing blood and grease. The first set of attractions above is indicating a superfluous choice; the second group of temptations goes deep inside him. And therefore, just after 'entrails winking out of a grey fur, coozing blood and grease', Shah's mouth is filled with saliva. These lines provide a clear picture of the personality of

Shah, whose attraction for beauty fails to hide the ugliness of his character. He is a corrupt, cunning person, exhibiting sophistication outside but thoroughly rotten inside. He is symbolic representation of a large section of business community thriving on the new craze for development of infrastructure.

Dharmen Shah has a nefarious vision of building the skyscrapers; with his greedy eyes, he looks at a cleaner and more beautiful Mumbai. Shah peeps through the horizon of multiple possibilities of land, multistoried buildings, and even the tossing waves of crystal clear ocean. His personal doctor, Nayak, however, warns him: "*That* again. That city is going to kill you, Dharmen" (55). But his obsession for Mumbai cannot camouflage his lust for money. He is obstinate in his plan of making super deluxe apartments. This is clear from the following example: "Shah hit the window; it trembled. 'Those Chinese have all the will power in the world. And, here we haven't had ten minutes of will power since Independence' " (55).

Aravind Adiga has emphasized the greed of Dharmen Shah time and again. The construction of buildings is Shah's dream only for minting money and is not guided by any humanitarian concern; it is whetted by his avarice, his cunningness, his corrupt nature, his playing with girls, his game of power politics against the powerless people. These helpless people include the slum dwellers and the senior citizens of Vishram Society. Adiga also speaks of Shah's hawkish nature.

In the money game of Shah all is right, all values are swept aside. Adiga is very critical of this money consciousness. This money is earned by any means, fair or foul. The novelist is not against the honest money. But the pity is that too much money comes through dishonest ways; honest means takes dozens of years to earn; but Shah and his ilk want it in a few years. That is pity of the whole situation of the business world.

In this nefarious act Shah's left hand is Shanmugham, who is his hidden, secret agent. But Shanmugham has no recognition in the Confidence Group of Shah. As Aravind Adiga has depicted:

> Every builder has one special man in his company. This man has no business card to hand out, no title; he is not even on the company payroll. But he is the builder's left hand. He does what the builder's right hand does not want to know about. If there is trouble, he contacts the police or the mafia. If there is money to be paid to a politician, he carries the bag. If someone's knuckles have to be broken, he breaks them. *You* are Mr Shah's left hand (128).

Shanmugham is, in the practical sense, centre of power politics played by the builder. The benefit of this arrangement is that if things go wrong, Shanmugham will be caught and Shah will go scot-free.

Shah knows how to convert copper into gold. It is through this gold that he knocks open the window to his future business. Adiga has depicted Shah, "The builder smiled; he struck the window with a golden ring, …" (204)

Hence, these examples arguably prove that window is a perfect tool for depiction of life of the Society presented by Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*. Window has a web woven from every side. So, the builder uses to keep his windows open for money as a materialistic world; and for Masterji material gain is "nothing" (330). His memories are everything for him. This web symbolizes complicated power politics in the novel.

Once this window has been lifeline of Masterji and also his door to Vishram Society. Parliament, which was earlier a source of strength to Masterji, becomes now a trouble spot for him. Ram Khare threatens him: "General outrage. Let him be thrown from the window, kicked senseless, shoot to death – anything!" (314). But this 'anything' of him has an answer in Masterji's "nothing" (330). It clearly shows how the common window

has become a tool of power politics, which generally allowed the betterment of society, but it has now become a tool for revenge and greediness.

Nothingness in the story has become one of the main themes in the novel, *Last Man in Tower*. Nothing is a powerful word in Indian tradition and literature and has its traces in the Western world too. Aravind Adiga has played well with this theme and he has used it as denial of money and justice all through the novel.

For liberal Masterji, nothing may be at times, a thing, something, and sometimes everything. It is like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Othering"; a process by which the empire can define itself against those it colonises, excludes and marginalises. Masterji believes in all natural laws; either of physics, or that of humanity. He thinks of his fellow residents living in Vishram Society and the slums nearby as his own family.

Mr Shah sends his Mercedes for a face-to-face conversation with Masterji, but this luxury has been Masterji's unease. Masterji protests and does not want to sit in the car. Masterji has registered his anger by asking, "What is all this about?" (219) Ramesh Ajwani of 2C, who accompanied him, a natural-born middle-man, broker the deal, immediately replies: "Mr Shah has sent his car for you; he is waiting in his Malabar Hill home. You have *nothing* to fear, He admires teachers" (219). Further, Adiga depicts Masterji's protest and uneasiness:

> Everything in the moving car was sumptuous – the air-conditioned air, the soft cushions, the floral fragrance – and all of it added to Masterji's discomfort (220).

Hence, the luxury of Shah is nothing for Masterji. He has been guided by austerity in his life style throughout. His needs are minimum so that he can fulfil all his desires by meager means. He looks like an ideal

Gandhian, both in his attitude and his actions. In this context, Mahatma Gandhi speaks of:

> Formerly, men were made slaves under physical compulsion. Now they are enslaved by temptation of money and of luxuries that money can buy (29).

Thus, his Gandhian way is mistaken by powerful people as weakness, which can be subjugated. Later on, they find him a man of iron will, who can die but never bend down.

Adiga talks about "nothing" by depicting the bribery and corruption as "black water crashing into the ocean wall that was meant to keep it out, rolling back and crushing again" (224). However, Masterji has been threatened but he sticks to his principle and asks for nothing in return. His principle of nothing is not accepted by Shanmugham, Shah's duplicate. So he terrorises him like anything. He wants to see Masterji to come out of his Gandhian ways. Masterji's blood sugar was "chuckling" (225), which results in his dimmed eyes. He mistakes the oceans as full of glucose. Ajwani and Shanmugham try to help Masterji by allowing him Shah's personal golden fitted toilet. Masterji does never like luxuries, that also if offered as bribe. This may turn him a corrupt person from a simple one.

Threat to Masterji has started from his refusal of the offer of redevelopment when he is forced to visit Mr Shah's magnificent house. This type of vulgar display of pomp and show by Shah, makes him further determined not to have anything to do with Shah's proposed plan. During this visit, Masterji does not meet Mr Shah, but the glamour of corrupt wealth turns Shah's absence into a stronger presence. Masterji now understands fully well what Shah is and what he wants—a thoroughly corrupt man seeking more and more of gold and power. From here starts Masterji's determined Gandhian journey. At Shah's place in Malabar Hill, while waiting for him to arrive there, Masterji asks Shanmugham: "This

place is dilapidated, dangerous, and unfit for human beings to be around. … Did you bring me here to *coerce* me?" (225) Masterji is offered tastefully fried *pakoras* on a silver plate. Furious Masterji "slapped at the tray" (226). Masterji, though peaceful most of the time, bursts into verbal and physical violence. Without touching the food, Masterji leaves the place without meeting Mr Shah. He returns back to Vishram Society on his own. Masterji has mentioned to his friends, Mr Pinto and Shelley, what has happened back there – "They were threatening me" and "Of course I left" (227).

Masterji puts his observation regarding Mumbai in these words:

> 'There's something bigger than us involved here, Mr Pinto. Yesterday, when I was at the builder's terrace I saw something in the ocean. Things are changing too fast in this city. Everyone knows this, but no one wants to take responsibility. To say: "Slow down. Stop. Let's think about what's happening." Do you understand me?' (227)

As a man of vision, Masterji can predict the negative aspects of this mindless redevelopment of the Metro. All the development works going on cater to the needs of those, who have money and care a whit for those who have no or little money.

Back in Malabar Hill, Shah has been hoping the presence of Masterji, but Shanmugham has replied, "He became violent, sir. Ask Giri. He hit the tray and then he ran out" (229). Mr Shah becomes angry and accepts his fault not being there in or before time, and says: "I still don't understand. You and that broker – all you had to do was keep that teacher there till I got back" (229). But none of them can fathom the depth of the character that Masterji has; none can acknowledge that he is a different person altogether and does not care for superfluous things of life, like eatables served on silver plate. It looks from the very beginning that Masterji is made for higher things of life like idealism, humanism, and broader perspective that really make human life worthwhile.

Shah has come to bitter realisation that Masterji is going to accept nothing, that he would stick to his point of not selling his flat, that he has to fight very tough enemy this time. He begins with threatening Masterji. He is threatened whenever he comes out of his flat by the hired henchmen of Shah.

Khare closed the log book and sniffed.

'Before that I was the guard at the Raj Kiran Housing Society in Kalina. A good Society. There too they had an offer of redevelopment from a builder. One man refused to sign the offer – a healthy young fellow, not like you – and one morning he tripped down the stairs and broke his knees. He signed in his hospital bed.'

Masterji closed his eyes for a beat.

'Are you threatening me, Ram Khare?'

'No, sir. I am informing you that there is a snake in my mind. It is long and black.'

The guard spread his arms wide. 'And I wanted you to see this black snake too. …

What cheek, Masterji thought, walking to the entranceway of his Society. *Talking of a 'black snake' in Vishram* (206-207).

An another incident also takes place, so:

'Masterji' – he burped – 'do you know, another person died in a building collapse on Tuesday?' ….

'Are you the one making the phone calls, Kothari?' Masterji asked. 'Are you the one threatening us?' …

As he turned the key in his door, the phone rang. The moment he picked it up, it went dead (252).

The growing threatening is countered by Masterji with the help of his friends. The triumvirate (235); Masterji, the Pintos–Albert Pinto and his wife Shelley–and Mrs. Georgina Rego, has a better plan to protect themselves for not accepting anything from the builders. The triumvirate has been threatened in broad daylight in Mumbai. Masterji is confident of the moral strength of his group, and says: "We don't need anyone's help. We're the triumvirate" (236).

Masterji has decided to approach the police and the lawyer as well. 'Parekh and Sons Advocate' is a legal firm, who has their attractive motto, "Legal Hawk with Soul & Conscience" (254). The advocate, Mr Parekh, calls "Confidence Shah", nothing but engaged in "*number two* activities" (255), and a "slum rat" too. Mr Parekh has legally trapped Shah under Mofa Act 1963, MCSA Act 1960. Masterji also suggests Mr Parekh that he has "nothing" to offer him as fee: "I cannot pay you. It is a case you must take in the public interest. The security of senior citizen in this city is at stake" (257).

On returning to Vishram Society, Masterji has come to know that Shah has played his game of power politics well. Shah has almost undermined the existence of parliament. Aravind Adiga calls it "violence in parliament" (260). There has been anger inside the Society. Masterji has been charged with turning the society into a house of violence. He has been blamed, "in forty-eight years nothing like this has happened in Vishram" (260).

Shah has, thus, successfully broken the backbone of the Society. Under the direction of Shah, Shahnmagumn has started to play the game of threatening opponents in daylight, in order to vacate the building. As a result, Mr Pinto's foot has been bandaged and Mrs Pinto's forehead was thrashed by a stick. The boy, with gold chain on his neck, has done it and has warned them "with a knife next time" (259). The boy, while beating the Pintos, has repeatedly asked, "who wants nothing?" (*ibid*). He has then

further added: “Do you understand now, what it means, to want nothing?” (*ibid.*)

Despite all the threatening to Masterji’s life and limbs, he stands firm against this unethical practice, opposes the allegation on him, and moves on:

> ‘Don’t worry, Mr Pinto. I’ll go to the police at once. I’ll tell them to arrest Mr Shah. I taught the sons of some of the constables. You don’t worry.’ …
>
> The old accountant shook his head. ‘It’s all over, Masterji.’
>
> ‘What is all over?’
>
> ‘We can’t go on like this. Today my foot is hurt, tomorrow….’ Leaving the papaya on the ground, Masterji stood up.
>
> ‘You must be brave, Mr Pinto. This Shah cannot threaten us in daylight.’
>
> Mrs Pinto pleaded with her face and fingers. ‘Please, Masterji, let’s forget about this. Let’s just sign Mr Shah’s document and leave this building. I began all this by saying I didn’t want to go. Now I tell you, it’s over. Let’s go. You come and have dinner with us this evening. We’ll eat together.’
>
> ‘I won’t eat with cowards.’
>
> Masterji kicked the papaya; shedding its newspaper wrapping, it scudded along and smacked the wall of Mrs Saldanha’s kitchen.
>
> ‘I’m going to the police station, with or without you,’ he said. ‘This builder thinks he can frighten *me*? In my own home?’ (259-260)

The above talk is indicative of dissent in the camp of Masterji. But undaunted, Masterji is ready to go all the way, all alone. This loneliness is common fate of almost all the tragic heroes of history and literature.

After this incident, Masterji has to face the interruption in the water and electricity supply in his flat. Masterji feels threatened within and outside the Society. The Society has passed a resolution, by the majority of fourteen out of sixteen shareholders to expel Masterji. He is asked to vacate the premises within thirty days. Shah's mind has given birth to varieties of threats and Shanmugham has applied them. It generates alertness in Masterji's mind:

> A man in danger must follow a routine.
>
> Masterji now went out only twice a day. Morning for milk, evening for bread. In public he kept close to the crowd; every ten steps or so he turned around and checked behind him (272).

Masterji has decided to "fight evil" (246). His faith is in the Republic of India and he tries, each of the following, one by one:

> Police.
>
> Media.
>
> Law and order.
>
> Social workers.
>
> Family.
>
> Students and old boys. (245)

Masterji plans to change his lawyer and report to media, where his student Noronha has been working. Masterji, with the concept of "nothing", has moved with his son, Gaurav Murthy, in the lobby of *Times of India*, well before five o'clock, "... and it came to nothing" (312). Gaurav is different

from Masterji, because he always suffers from hunger for food and money. It is an ironical match between father and son, who are poles apart. Gaurav Murthi did nothing for his future, and hardly cares for human values. Gaurav, further, becomes a big critic of his father. He needs plenty of money to purchase an apartment in posh area of Mumbai, where film actors use to live. Junior Murthy couple is in need of enough money all the time. Gaurav, therefore, has an eye on his father's wealth, including the jewelry of his dead mother.

In the same row, other residents of Vishram Society have become in favour of Gaurav, because all of them want Masterji to sell his flat to Shah. He has blamed Masterji for too much honesty. He questions Masterji's principle of nothing and absolute disinterest in things material:

> 'Father, what is it you want from the Confidence Group?'
>
> Masterji had never seen Gaurav sound and look so decisive. He felt the strength draining from him.
>
> 'Nothing.'
>
> The boy raised his upper lip in a sneer. Purnima used to do that. 'You're lying, Father.'
>
> 'Lying?'
>
> 'Don't you see what's behind this nothing? *You*. You think you are a great man because you're fighting this Shah. Another Galileo or Gandhi. You're not thinking of your own grandson.' (297)

After this episode Gaurav becomes indifferent to Masterji.

Masterji, an experienced man, even in the situation of 1965 War, has started eating less and less to contribute to the national cause at the call of Lal Bahadur Shastri. Masterji, therefore, is always looking out for national cause where he can do something. But his own son is self-centred like most

of the people of big city like Mumbai. In all these humanitarian cause, Masterji's philosophy of 'nothing' helps him a lot. He survives on almost nothing and wants to use the saving for some social or national cause. Like most of the honest men, Masterji also suffers at times from doubt, whether his die-hard honesty is justified and fruitful in this largely dishonest world.

> An honest man? He had fooled his Society, the Pintos, even himself, but here on the open terrace he was stripped of all his lies. He had come here, frightened by the boycott, not oblivious to the possibilities of money, ready to betray the Pintos. Ready to betray the memories of his dead wife and dead daughter that were in the walls and paint and nails of Vishram Society (223).

Above lines point out to what is called 'the dark night of the soul', when even the conscience of honest people begins to hover between right and wrong. But Masterji comes out of this dilemma and always follows what his conscience says to him.

But the tower answers, Masterji is, "An honest man? ….not oblivious to the possibilities of money: (223). On this, Shah argues to his left-hand Shanmugham that he has done his best to convert Masterji's 'nothing' to 'something', by offering him the best deal possible, but with no effect: "We have been reasonable in every way with this old teacher. We asked him what he wanted from us, and promised to give it to him." (229). Being an experienced and self-made builder, Shah knows what the ins and outs of the business world is. So he is bent on to break Masterji's "nothing" by hook or by crook.

Dharmen Shah is a crafty builder. He is a shark, who wants to devour small builders. Shah uses every trick to break Masterji, let it be sweetener, threatening, boycotting, and using tides among the Vishram's residents or so. Shah tries threat by blank phone calls, sometimes even changing his voice, making it inaudible. He never leaves a chance to

demoralise Masterji, or even provokes Vishram Society's secretary to issue a notice with a long and bold caption: "Some facts about 'a certain person' who has received respect from us for thirty years. But why? Now we find out the truth" (215). This face-off also says that Masterji has used to teach out of the syllabus lessons. Thus, Shah wants to create a fear psychosis in Masterji, who becomes tense but does not lose his heart.

Shanmugham has also been thinking many things against Masterji. He is a stooge of Shah, and both of them are trying to rope in many men and many methods in their pursuit of power politics going on in the Society and the construction business. Shanmugham points out, "There are many things we can do, and we will try them *one by one*. (Italics added) But you *must* trust me and Mr Shah" (209). These "one by one" are; boycott (210, 211, 214), refusing the top-up class (211), "threatening" (227), so why have we respected him blindly-notice (215-6), and then the taunts began. (218) Further, Mr Ajwani has not signed the paper and he gets, "nothing" (402 & 411). Later on, others don't get even the second instalment of the offer.

The brutality of power politics is clear when Masterji's head is hammered down by Ibrahim Kudwa of 4C. Masterji falls down:

> Masterji lay there like that, unable to move, though he saw things with clarity. Ibrahim Kudwa stared with an open mouth; the hammer dropped from his hand. *I should reach for the hammer,* Masterji thought, but the Secretary lunged and picked it up. Now he felt a weight on his chest: Kothari, pressing a knee on his torso, turned the hammer upside down and stubbed it on his forehead using both his hands. It hurt. He tried to shout, but he heard only a groan from his mouth. Now something, or someone, sat on his legs, and he lost control of them; he was aware that Kothari was pounding his forehead with the hammer again and again. The blows were landing somewhere far away, like stones falling on the surface of a lake he was deep inside. He thought of a line from the Mahabharata: '… King

> Dhritharashtra's heart was like a forest lake, warm on the surface but icy at the bottom.' Kothari stopped and took a breath. *Poor man's arms must be aching by now* (388-389).

The references to the Mahabharata indicate that this type of suppression of the weak by the strong has been going on since centuries. The story of Masterji, therefore, is almost archetypal. It is also reflection of the thrashing of Velutha in *The God of Small Things* by the powerful Kerala Police. It should be noted here that Masterji was an old man while Velutha was young and sturdy. Secondly, the police cruelty is already well known. But the cruelty of co-members of a housing society is very rare. Masterji is pinned down by many members of the society, who want him to surrender before the might of money that Shah possesses:

> He was sure he had never seen anyone move as fast as Kothari was moving with the hammer, ... Then the hammer hit his forehead again. 'Kothari. Wait.' Now Sanjiv Puri came from the bedroom with a large dark thing, which he lowered on to Masterji's face. When the dark thing touched his nose, Masterji understood. Yes. The pillow from his bed. It pressed down on his nose and crushed his moustache: he understood that Sanjiv Puri was sitting on it. His legs thrashed: not to free themselves, but to take him down to the bottom of the lake faster. He was in very cool and black water now (389).

While Masterji is writhing in pain, others are casually talking about his condition among themselves. This type of situation prevailing in a society speaks negatively of fellow feeling that is the most essential element of living harmoniously. But this is bound to happen when living is not guided by any human value, but by power politics of the vested interest.

> 'He's unconscious. Sanjiv, enough. Get up.'
>
> Sanjiv Puri looked at his wife, who was sitting on Masterji's legs, and then at Ibrahim Kudwa, who was watching things with an open

> mouth. 'Quickly. You take the feet, Kothari will take the head,' Mrs Puri told her husband. 'Ibby, pick up that hammer. Don't leave it here.' …
>
> 'Wait,' Sanjiv Puri said. 'First put some more tape on his mouth. In case he wakes up.'
>
> Kothari did so. Then the two men lifted Masterji's body, and moved towards the door. Mr Puri winced: 'I stepped on something.' His wife kicked the Rubik's Cube out of their path (388-389).

This collective murder of Masterji simply because he was different from others and had a voice of his own, defies all human norms. What is of further importance, is the unyielding spirit of Masterji; he has taken up the challenge against the majority single handed. It is how Masterji feels about death when he is thrown from the terrace:

> And then he realized that the thing that was blocking his passage was cleared, and he was falling; his body had begun its short earthly flight – which it completed almost instantaneously – before Yogesh Murthy's soul was released for its much longer flight over the oceans of the other world (391).

Masterji came from nothing and left with nothing—'from the dust we have come, to the dust we returneth'. But his brave courage and constant fight against injustice would not end up as an untold story. Adiga has created a tragic figure in Masterji, who would remain in the mind of the reader for many-many years, till the fight continues between the powerful and the weak. The powerful may be victorious, but ultimately he is vanquished by the struggle and belief of the powerless. There would be always people like Ram Khare, the security guard of Vishram Society to remember Masterji and salute him: "*The truth be told*, he thought, *I was always hoping that Masterji would defeat the builder. Where would I find work at another building at my age?* (392)

Aravind Adiga has given a realistic description of the theme of money in the novel. Money, for Yogesh A Murthy is “nothing”, but that for Dharmen Vrijesh Shah is “everything”. Ironically, people like Masterji are very few while Shah and his likes are many. Therefore, the power politics is tilted in favour of those, who have money and muscle power. But this is a passing phase only. Character like Masterji, points to the possibility of future, when another Gandhi may convert the situation for the poor majority. Adiga has described his own feeling in an interview:

> Money itself is amoral. It can liberate people as easily as it can destroy them, ... My role as a novelist is only to dramatize certain conflicts taking place because of the generation of so much new wealth (2).

Ulka Anjaria (2015) in her erudite article, “Realist Hieroglyphics: Aravind Adiga and the New Social Novel”, discusses the human tendency of adding sweetener in their offer, which is fueled by the urban greediness. It is to become them rich in a day by “just a push” (374). This push is for a senior citizen, Masterji, by another elderly of the same Society. It is an alarming situation and problem of metro cities all through the world. Where, Anjaria identifies:

> Like more traditional works of social realism, *Last Man* exposes the hypocrisy of bourgeois respectability in the face of greed, and as such is intended—once again—to stir the middle classes out of their political apathy. Yet more acutely than his other works, this novel registers an awareness of the outdatedness of the conventional temporality and tropology of social realism and incorporates this awareness into the text itself (124).

Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam (2017) also recognises the memory concept and questions to her readers, “Who is going too far—the Vishramites ready for any battle to build a better home for their kids or Masterji willing to

block the progress of all for the comfort offered by old memories? (5) It is in the context of memory, Masterji's words are poignant and worth quoting:

> 'I have memories here, Mrs Puri. My late daughter, my late wife. Shall I show you Sandhya's sketchbook? It is full of drawings of the garden. Every tree and plant and spider's web and stone and…' (185)

In the same fashion, Marcela Valdes (2011) raises many relevant questions. Masterji, philosophically, thinks of the other fellow residents, "Am I looking at good people or bad?" (344). Valdes has commented on this statement:

> The same question arises about Masterji himself. Vain, shrewd and stubborn, he is one of the most delightfully contradictory characters to appear in recent fiction. Is Masterji's refusal meant to protect a more vulnerable tenant? Is he holding out for more cash? Is he simply afraid of change? Does he relish the sensation of power? Is his refusal rooted in incorruptible principle or dictatorial ego? (2)

Questions and doubts of Valdes make the character of Masterji much more interesting and human. Any man of his learning and teaching for so many years with varied experiences is not supposed to be a simpleton. Whatsoever intension Valdes may have in her comments, she makes Masterji's character enriched, even if unwittingly.

Comparing Adiga with other Western English novelists, Alan White (2011) has tried to find out the answers to the above question of Valdes by comparing Adiga with Victorian novelist:

> This is where the distinction between Adiga and a Victorian novelist is laid bare. The latter's public would have expected answers to questions like this. . . . Dickens, in spite of his genius and undoubtedly with half an eye on his popularity, would often submit to this whim. Adiga's readership is less inclined to believe we live in

> morally straightforward times. It's the ambiguity with which he draws the story—even as it becomes by turns tenser and more brutal—that makes it so powerful.
>
> The real test of idealists like Masterji lies in how effectively they combat the fear unleashed by real estate kings and a state apparatus subservient to the wealthy (5).

Althusserian repressive state apparatuses (RSA); government, courts, and police have been controlled by the powers of the state; political, legislative, army. To escape with the problem, Masterji has tried those one by one but on the other hand, Shah has played with its brutality. Ulka Anjaria is analyzing political web through the political attitude:

> Adiga's works delineate a space of remarkable openness around the meaning of political literature and the formal structures on which such a literature might be founded, making him the object of criticism from all sides of the political spectrum. Yet, as I have suggested, the contradiction between the realist impulse to represent social issues and the potential unknowability of those issues is precisely what defines new social realism, befitting the unknown content of new political arrangements in the twenty-first century. It is within this space of contradiction that a futurity to the global novel might be forged. In this future, both realism and modernism are inadequate for the tasks of representing the experience of the contemporary and critiquing social inequalities—resulting in new and indeterminate literary forms. The nature of these forms—their commonalities across the globe, the new aesthetics they engender, and the modes they employ—remains, fittingly, to be seen (130-131).

Shah is not only cruel but he is also a cunning fox. He has fixed the deadline to accept the offer of redevelopment, is on the very next day of Gandhi Jayanti. Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam calls this tactful move:

> Poetic Justice of the book "Deadline," is especially remarkable for the two-pronged attack mounted on Masterji—horrifying social isolation and brute force unleashed by the very neighbors whom he had selflessly educated for half a century, and Masterji's Gandhian response to it. Masterji's neighbors become the agents of the real estate mafia. By the time they execute his murder and project it as a suicide, Shah's deadline for the demolition of Vishram has already expired and Masterji has overcome his fear of death. In his last moments, he is filled not with fear or sorrow but a sense of liberation that numbs all the pain. After Masterji's death, the moral ambiguity continues. Ironically, his enemies now appreciate his courage. Even the heartless Shah is shocked. Vishram is torn down to make way for Shah's skyscrapers, but the Vishramites fail to achieve the happiness or the compensation they had dreamt of. Most of them are preoccupied with assuaging their guilt. Some of them refuse the builder's money and engage in educating street kids in memory of Masterji (6).

Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam (2017) has specified the novel's conscience from the city of the living dead by commenting on the last lines of the novel in a way that clarifies most of the things about it:

> Nevertheless, the answers to a morally ambivalent age lie forgotten in India's ancient wisdom. The closing lines of the novel offer an image of constancy—the old banyan tree of Vishram Society that, like Masterji's spirit, survives the demolition, concrete rubble, barbed wire, and broken glass, to send out new roots and offer shelter to homeless families. In Indian culture, the banyan tree is a symbol of resilience, liberation, growth, compassion, and the wisdom of selfless giving. And looking at the tree, Adiga concludes: "Nothing can stop a living thing that wants to be free" (7).

A. J. Kirby (2011) has remarked rightly on the many qualities of the novel and the novelist:

> In *Last Man in Tower*, it is immediately apparent that author Adiga's writing has matured. His voice and his reach have grown, his eye for detail has sharpened, and the work in question is even more compelling. His semi-comic description and razor sharp characterizations are reminiscent of Dickens at the height of his power; Mr. Adiga's style is as unique as that of a Rushdie or an Amis (2).

There are ample examples of stylistics of Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*. However, this scholar has found that there seems to be negligible evidence of code-shifting or code-switching in the novel.

Other stylistic evidences have been exemplified below:

1. Using words for specific reasons, which includes identification to stress too: "Va-KHO-la, VAA-k'-la" (3), "no-tice, res-ee-den-ts" (13), "Vi-shraaam" (13), "sub-ject", "Gen-ral, Wa-ter, May-n-ten-anse" (14), "SiddhiVinayak" (17), "Ex-press" (31), "Mar-i-gold", "Mar-i...?"(33), "Va-KHO-la, VAA-k'-la" (168).

2. The use of Indian words with English spellings: for example, "Masterji" (1,8,...), "*khachada-wali*" (2), "*pucca*" (3,9), Bombaywallahas (3), "*nullah*" (142), *banians* (9), "*pagdi*" (16), "*gutka*" (20, 57), "*sansad*" (21), "*never* hot" (31), "Hai-ya! Hai-ya!" (41), "Rajabai Tower" (46), "*amaltas*" (51), "*gulmohar*" (51), "*banian*" (58), "*bindis*" (76), "*Aa chal ke tujhe, mein...*" (91), Dhobi-ghat" (102, 174), "*atma*" (160), "bhelpuri-..." (174), "*chikki*" (191), "*almirah*" (193), and "*rudraksha*" (205), "*pappad*", "*hisla*" (287).

3. Making compound words by using hyphens: “fast-food” (2), “polyp-like” (3), “rainwater-stained’, “cement-grey”, “rust-brown”, “fern-green”, “black-stone cross”, “three-foot-tall” (5), “blue-and-white”, “college-education” (5), “speed-tek” (6), “low-flying” (9), “Dark-skinned”, “blue-skinned” (15), “court-loving” (16), “red-and-yellow” (19), “early-evening” (20), “rum-man”, “gin-man” (21), “water-arrogance” (23), “early-morning” cat (26, 36), “show-off” (37), “Marine Lines–Charni Road–Grant Road–Mumbai Central–Elphinstone Road”, Middle-aged (47), “glow-in-the-dark” (76), “plastic-chair…” (95), “Wood-Lands” (134), and “Sangeeta-ji” (196).

4. Hyphenated sentence:

   “But-one-thing-you-must-know-before-you-move-here” (148)

5. Code-mixing and Code-switching:

   nullah – attention! (142), “The Pintos” (46), “*gutka*-stained” (62), “less-than-*pucca*” (244), “*sudarshan*-chakras” (163), “*bhelpuri*-vendor” (174), and “masala *kurkure*” (190).

6. Reduplication:

   i) Repeating without any change:
   “tuck tuck” (14), Slowly, slowly (19), “no no” (37), “Hai-ya! Hai-ya!” (41), “oy, oy” (42), “Illusion! Illusion!” (78) “*hurry, hurry*,…”, “*delay, delay*,…” (94), “*coming, coming*” (101), “Congratulations, congratulations” (125), “Money-money” (134), and “*Sonal, Sonal*” (193).

   ii) Repeated by the change of vowel: “yes, eyes” (41).

   iii) Repeated by the change of consonant:
   “rum-pum” (31), “So-Bo” (54).

iv) Repeated by the change of both; vowel and consonant: "green-gram".

7. Use of italics for emphasis in part of a sentence or a full sentence: *Person(s) to see* (13), "*present situation*" (15), *Very* good (16), "*now*" (22), "*tumbling*" (23), "*number two*" (26), "*that*" (33), "*half*", "*is*" (36), "*Where is Masterji?*" (40),

"*Before it is too late*", "*I must tell this boy all that we have been through. His grandmother and I. Life in Bombay in the old days. War in 1965 with Pakistan. War in 1971. The day they killed Indira Gandhi. So much more.*" (43),

"*Don't think badly of her.*", "*The way you get angry with people, caricature them, mock their voices, manners, ideas; the way you shrink flesh-and-blood humans into fireflies to hold in your palm.*" (45), "*So the Secretary was right, something is going on*," (49), "*dreams*" (56), "*this*", "*that*" (58), "*How nice*", "*to find a young woman in this modern day who can wear a sari well.*" (70) "*not*" (71), "*Man has risen from the earth, … , he may as well put his money back into the earth.*" (88), "*Tricked*" (92), "*We have the Battleship on our side,… How can we lose?*" (96) "*anything*" (133), "*wants*" (133), "*Who says it is falling down?, It will last for ever, if we take care of it.*" (164), "*Dearest Darling Catherine…… while preparing for an important executive meeting at the Institute, I found, quite serendipitously, your lovely little letter*" (166), "*extra*" (179), "*If anyone's getting a small sweetener*" (183), "What *power*" (189), and "*nothing*" (224).

8. Using phrases on their own i.e. a phrase in parenthesis as a full sentence: "The Battleship" (27), "A Rubik's Cube" (28), "Friendly Duck" (31), "Work in Progress" "Inconvenience is

Regretted", "Inconvenience in Progress", "Work is Regretted" (33), "Ms Responsibility" (35), "Down's syndrome" (34), "blue book" (45), "card mafia" (47), "the Pintos" (46) "The Very Best" (53), "Soda Pop" (58, 59), "No-Argument book" (66), "one-rat rule" (68), "black book" (118), and "left hand", "Left-hand man" (128).

9. Simile: "I climbed. Like a lizard..." (87).

10. Underlined word: <u>immediately</u> (8).

11. Capitalized Words:

    i) At initial positions:

    The Society (7), Society (7), Tower A (9), "black Cross" (20, 22, 23), "Silver Trophy and Gold Coin" (35), "D" (69). "H" (107), "Hanging Gardens" (109), "Opposition Party" (131).

    ii) All within the passages:
    "TUBERCULOSIS AWARENESS WEEK FUND-RAISING DRIVE" (27), "NO NOISE" (33), "HIGHEST PRICE", "SUPER LUXURY APARTMENTS" (64), "KNOW YOUR FACTS" (71), "SANDHYA MURTHY SKETCH & PRACTICE JOURNAL" (102), "YATT" (107), and "SPEED-TEK CYBER ZONE CYBER CAFÉ" (130).

12. Frequent references to famous writers, books, etc.:

    The Soul's Passageway after Death (29, 40),

    Which includes Masterji's re-read collections:

i) Old Rome: Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*; Tacitus, *The Annals; Plutarch, Illustrious Figures of the Roman Republic,*

ii) Old Bombay: *A Brief Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone*; *The Stages of the Creation of the City of Bombay, fully illustrated,*

iii) *Advanced French Grammar* (with Questions and Answers Provided)

Others: *Reader's Digest* (31), "*India Today*", "*Femina*" (31), "*Shankar's Weekly Magazines*" (32), "*Bhagwad Gita*" (32), "Ramayana" (113), and B. K. S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga*.

13. Writing words together as if they are a single word: "oyoyoyoyoy" (42), "Aaaargh!" (65).

14. Question tags:

"*You're next, aren't you?*" (120), "...won't you?", "Do it for your Sangeeta Aunty, won't you?" (208), "You're holding out to the very end, aren't you?" (244)

15. The contradictions and paradoxes: "important people in an impotent city" (34), "*Nos* to become *Yes*" (120).

16. The combinations of opposites in this novel. They are many, like "inhaling-exhaling" (99).

17. Short, but full sentence: "Look here." (16), "Take Them" (28), "Tomorrow", "Not me" (28) and "Work. Hard work" (117).

18. Slang: "Sister-fucker" (56).

19. Abbreviations: “BMC” (19), “TV” (21, 22), “TB” (27), “BKC”, “ICICI”, & “HSBC” (37), “KC” (39), “BHK”, “NOC” (71), “NRI” (72), and “MD” (130).

20. Use of foreign language words: “Café” (67), “*Rattus norvegicus. Rattus rattus. Bandicota bengalensis*” (68), “*caesura*” (126), “*accent aigu* (acute accent) *é*” (213),

21. Portmanteau: “So-Bo: south Bombay” (54).

Last Man in Tower, therefore, is a great novel both by its serious theme and matching serious style. It is bound to turn a classic in the coming years with more and more readers reading and appreciating it for its grand design with global implication expressed in a grand way.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Power is a common reality and it pervades all layers of society. The presence of power is deeply embedded into the existence of human history. The spread of democracy all over the world replacing the old system of hegemony has been a very slow process in India. Even when democracy has come into picture forty years earlier than the publication of *The God of Small Things*, it has not come of age in this country. Injustice, inequality, exploitation, oppression in Indian society has been continuing without much sign of abetment, leading to fierce power politics. All the three novels selected for this study chart out this game of power politics played by haves against the have-nots.

In *The God of Small Things*, power politics is played within the Ayemenem House and outside in the Kerala society. Within the house power game is depicted between Pappachi and Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Ammu and her children, and finally with Ammu and Chacko. Outside the house, this game is operative between Velutha and Comrade Pillai, Velutha and Kottayam Police, and Ammu and Inspector Thomas. Most of these conflicts have cruel side to them. Pappachi beats Mammachi with flower vase; Velutha is beaten to pulp; Ammu is humiliated so much by Inspector Thomas that she dies a lonely death in a cheap lodge, unseen and unsung. The unique element in Arundhati Roy is that she presents these power games with naturally graphic details. Nothing seems to be forced; nothing seems to be an overt propaganda by a social activist.

What is further remarkable in Arundhati Roy is her experimental use of English language. Her matter is intensely felt by the participating characters. The same is spontaneously transferred to the readers by modifying the language of expression. In order to make experiment much more plausible, she has selected seven-year old twins, Estha and Rahel, as the main narrator. Like small children they are keen on learning language as well as experimenting with it. With all curiosity of growing children, they see the unfolding world before them with innocence as well as bewilderment. There are moments of agony touching their hearts and they cling to Ammu, and at times to Velutha too, for security from the danger inside and outside. They become the main linguistic tool to express this power politics in crossword-like game. The beauty of *The God of Small Things* is speaking of 'small' things of life and connecting them with the wider and higher realities of existence, like the question of propriety, morality, and power game effecting even the essential feeling of love. This is coupled with the ongoing clash for dominance between the powerful and the powerless. As Alex Tickell, thus, concludes; "the whole novel becomes a subtle meditation on the interconnectedness of the world" (11).

The subject matter of the novel, with symbolic and multiple meanings, is expressed in almost near perfect language by Roy. To quote Roy (1997) herself: "As a writer I govern language, and language does not govern me" (15). With this much assured confidence and freedom, Roy has made English language flexible enough to bend to all her needs – a great feat achieved by any Indian English novelist so far.

While Velutha and Ammu, the main characters of *The God of Small Things* are tragic losers in the power game, Balram Halwai in

The White Tiger is a winner. He is a modern character, who does not flinch to take any devious path to achieve his objective. His sense of determination and courage pull him out from an area of darkness, a remote village in the backwaters of Bihar, to the realm of glamorous light in sparkling Bangalore. From a mean worker at a tea stall and then a humiliated driver of Ashok, he becomes a successful entrepreneur with his own fleet of Toyota Qualis. In this process of rise from the ranks, he has to commit the murder of his master. He makes compensation for his crime by helping the helpless when he has enough resources. His character may not fit the classical concept of a hero; but heroism in contemporary age is equated with status and wealth, even if gained by dubious means. Although Balram may have his current sympathizers, his character has still not the haunting presence of Ammu and Velutha, because they have traits of tragic figures of the classical literature. May be, with the change of time and taste, Balram may lose a little more of his shine. But Ammu and Velutha, conceived by Roy on a higher plane, would probably be always in a commanding position. Hardly losers are as dear to the heart of the reader as Ammu and Velutha. Essentially, it means that power game played by murky politics may not be everything; a character with elemental strength may beat this game in the final test of time.

This fact is much more obvious if the relentless fight of Masterji in *Last Man in Tower* is taken into account. His is almost a lone fight against Dharmen Shah, the mighty builder of Mumbai. While Masterji owns only an old flat, Shah is a multi-millionaire, with both fabulous money and intimidating muscle power. In addition, he is cunningly sophisticated and persuasively articulate. Lastly, he can adopt any means whatsoever to achieve his objective. Masterji is the just opposite of Shah. He is guided by his age-old idealism. For him both aim and means are sacred. He can

never stoop to the level of Shah. While Shah is thoroughly corrupt, Masterji is thoroughly honest. Thus, the power politics in the second novel of Adiga is essentially different from that of *The White Tiger*. *Last Man in Tower* poses searching questions related to the uneven and mindless development of cities, resulting into unequal power game. As commented by Cutie et al. (2012):

> Being a journalist he had the eye to see what emotional people failed to see about the development. The under privileged who live in the shadows of Globalization became his heroes. He presents how development has impacted the socio-cultural as well the moral values of people (11).

On the physical and moral level, the power game is not so long in *The White Tiger* as it is in *Last Man in* Tower. In *Last Man in Tower*, the power struggle is gigantic because, except his faith and belief, Masterji has no resources to give a challenge to Dharmen Shah. On physical level his challenge is quite unequal; but on moral level Masterji is a giant compared to pigmy Shah. But in his fragile body, there is the steely strength of courage and belief. One is reminded of Shakespeare when he comments:

> He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect me to tell you how! (13-17)

There are both common facts and differences in the two novels of Adiga selected for this study. Though the power game is common, the dimension of power struggle has subtle differences. In *The White Tiger* the power game boils down to village versus city; in *Last Man in Tower*, it is city against city – Vishram Society set against the corporate world of Dharmen Shah. In the first novel,

Balram does not only survive, but thrives as well, because he can, at times, compromise on principles. In the second novel Masterji is an uncompromising idealist, who is humiliated, tortured, and finally, thrown to death from the roof top. He is a tragic hero and *Last Man in Tower* is a tragic novel. But Balram is far short of a tragic stature, and *The White Tiger* is not a tragedy.

When it comes to finding suitable language for the power politics, the strategy of Adiga is to adopt innovative language to match his content. But he is less experimental than Arundhati Roy. Pashupati Jha (1995) in a research essay has clarified that the language of anger mostly indicates psychology of superiority among the dominant class in Indian society. At times, even the use of English mixed with vernacular language also indicates the superiority complex in the speaker. These words of Jha are relevant to all the three novels selected for this study.

Rositta Joseph Valiyamattam (2017) has touched upon the moving themes, virtues and vices in *Last Man in Tower*. She has argued that the novel is not only protest of a single man, Masterji, but it has a universal appeal. She interrogates many "disturbing questions about contemporary ideas of national development and identifies survival strategies adopted by citizens in a morally ambivalent India" (2). The novelist's universal implications even may have reference to the massive displacement of people during Beijing Olympic Games of 2008. It has also references to London and other big cities that had hosted many major events worldwide.

Last Man in Tower can be summed up as the stubborn fight of one man against his times. It is set in the maximum city of Mumbai, where the future is defined by big businessmen and progress is measured in terms of skyscrapers. Masterji's fight is like the freedom struggle of Gandhi; he too believes in the final victory of

morality over immoral principles. Although he meets death, his victory is symbolized by opening of school near Vishram Society and regret of the people for the murder of Masterji, a noble soul dying for a noble cause.

All the three selected novels for this study, therefore, have greatness in them in the sense that they finally stand for humanism against the forces of barbarism. They are also remarkable for their unique use of language to express power politics in Indian society.

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