



# Social Retreatism in The White Tiger of Aravind Adiga

Dr. Barun Kumar Jha

Professor

Department of English

Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak, India

**Abstract:** Retreatism is one of the features of strain theory. The proposition of strain theory expresses that tension got from social variables, such as the absence of cash, absence of nature of each essential need, drives individuals to carry out wrongdoing. Retreatism additionally revolves round numerous other social and individual viewpoints like objectives for economic wellbeing, assumptions, dreams satisfaction, feelings and class rather than caste. This goes under the General strain theory. Robert Merton says how society comes down to individuals to acquire socially and culturally acknowledged objectives and qualities. Society expects all these to an individual though he lacks the means. This lack of means leads to strain which may lead to crime in one or another way. Normally we can see the drugs seller and individuals who are involved in prostitution. All are also a part of our society. The selling of drugs and prostitution are used as means to gain financial security. The strain that comes from this prevalent burden is the outcome of the two levels. Some of the time the guidelines of the family might change the impression of an individual. Furthermore, it is an extremely normal thing which can see or tune in from wherever from consistently youngster. There is consistently a conflict between the social design and the individual longing of a person. This conflict makes an individual insubordinate at some level and afterwards, he attempts to do something unique concerning the society in which he lives. Then again, a singular experience of the aggravation which he gets during the satisfaction of his fantasies.

**Key Words - Strain Theory, retreatism, conflict, insubordinate, aggravation.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Retreatism is not the cause of an individual's decision. For example, a poor boy who belongs to a rural area and he goes to the big city and behave in the manners of the people of that place may become the reason of stress for him. Such kinds of strain improve the probability of wrongdoing. These strains lead to negative feelings like displeasure and dissatisfaction. These feelings conceive an offspring tension for remedial activity and wrongdoing is one potential outcome. Further Merton says that degenerate conduct or distinctive choice is a result of the focused-on people groups insight. At the point when individuals are denied means to acquire socially esteemed objectives. It can occur on account of a lower-class individual who may utilize the eccentric or criminal way as an asset of monetary security. On the foundation of the strain theory, Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory depends on three unique factors: the presence of destructive driving forces, evacuation of positive motivations and inability to accomplish an objective. So, the strain is additionally unique as it is the aftereffect of various variables. As indicated by the Strain theory there are three sorts of strain-intense pressure, roundabout intense pressure, and persistent pressure. Each pressure has its qualities, indications and span. Robert Merton have illustrated five methods of variation incorporate conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion.

## II. DISCUSSION

Retreatism is the fourth mode of combination of goals and means. Retreatism affects society it involves rejecting both the goals and the means for example one might just drop out of society giving up everything. This research article will study the novels of Aravind Adiga, in the context of strain theory. We can see that research has moved from literary criticism to literary theory. It has become the characteristic of fiction; it will be the beginning with a brief statement of the principal elements which enter the composition of the novels:

Can a man break out of the coop? What if one day a driver took his employer's money and ran? What would his life be like? The answer is that only a man who is prepared to see his family destroyed-hunted, beaten and burned alive by the masters- can break out of the cools. That would take no normal human being but a freak, a pervert of nature. It would take a white tiger, "A White Tiger" the story of a social entrepreneur.... (Adiga 176-177)

In his novel, the writer shows that circumstances and the social structure can subtly coerce poverty- strikes people to make an immoral choice that is opposite to social norm as well as mankind. Aravind Adiga depicts the condition of the people who are suffering in our country. Life seems a curse to them. Balram, the central character tells his story to Mr. Jiabao. He comes to realize that Premier Jiabao is coming to India to know reality with regards to Bangalore and the business. He believes that he is the perfect man who can give the real data to him thus composes a progression of letters to him about his story from being a worker to a business person. Balram's venture from murkiness to light presents the part of retreatism. The reality of a nation is its dominant debasement. Tumultuous administration and profound class division constrain him to break out of the coop by following unlawful and corrupt both of killing his lord, Mr. Ashok for seven lakh rupees needed to turn into a rich man from the gathering of chicken coops. The bad form and destitution lead to Crime. In fair where the poor are overlooked by thriving and rich individuals, it gives a voice to retreatism. In that circumstance, an individual chooses an alternate objective with an alternate mean. The helpless like Balram has consistently been denied instruction and monetary freedom. As we know that education is the lifeline of progress in today's time. So, the story of Balram is an alarm for the policymakers of the country. If there will be no attention to this matter, then more and more movement of crime will happen. Balram shares a secret with Mr Jiabao. He tells him about the rooster coop. Through the example of the rooster coop, he shares the situation of the poor like him. In old Delhi, behind the Jama Masjid, cages are used for keeping chickens. The whole cage gives a horrible stench. The butcher shows off the flesh and organs of a recently chopped up chicken. The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organ but say nothing. They know that they are the next to be chopped up. Even then, they neither rebel nor try to come out of the coop. This applies to the human beings in this country. Indians are the world's honest people. It is because most people are caught in Rooster Coop. In this country, a servant may steal a rupee coin or two but leave a million dollars in front of him. The servant is a simple human being. But he is in a rooster coop that forces him to be honest. Strangely, a handful of men train the remaining 99.9% of people the feeling of servitude has gone so deep that even if one gives the key of freedom to the man, he will throw it back while cursing. If a person is enough strong to face the destruction of his family, he can break the bars of this coop. The same is happens with Balram, he finds himself in the rooster coop. He destines to go to jail for a crime that he has not committed. He does not think once that he will tell the truth to the judge. A servant is considered as loyal as Hanumana. It is expected that he will be loyal to his masters as Hanumana remained with Rama. But Balram as a servant and as a Hindu is different, He follows that rule at the beginning of his job. But later he changes his way:

Which gods arise, though? There are so many choices. See the Muslims have one God. The Christians have three gods. And Hindus have 36,000,000 gods. Making a grand total of 36,000,004 divine arises for me to choose from. (Adiga 8)

Balram does not spare any religion. There is only an anti-religious feeling in him. For him, there are 36,000,000 Hindu gods. One Muslim god and three Christian gods made a total of 36,000,004 divine areas. It is one of the main reasons that make Balram rebellious. He does not believe in God. He does not follow the worship of Hanumana. If he is a religious person, he can think once or twice before murdering his master. But the force and desire of change make him choose a completely different goal as well as a different way to achieve that goal. Balram after becoming Ashok Sharma in Bangalore does not follow the sentiments. He treats the workers as an employee and not as family members because he is the result of the same treatment. He is a white tiger that has no friends. He shows his professional attitude in treating his employers. He has become the master of the drivers though he had been a driver to a master, it is because he chooses a different way to other drivers. He states:

When the work is done, I kick them out of the office: no chitchat, no cups of coffee: A white tiger keeps no friends. It's too dangerous (Adiga 302)

Balram's father who is a rickshaw puller also supports him to become a good man. He always thinks about the progress of his son. In their family, there is no rule for school and education. Children are destined to labour only. But Vikram, the father of Balram, goes against Kusum and send him to school. He says that all his life he worked as an animal but he does not allow anyone to destroy the life of his son. However, Vikram dies after some time because of T.B. He does not alive to see the success of his son. But Balram never forgets his gathering. He always remembers his father and his nature and the character that affects him many times.

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

Balram Halwai is the central character of the novel The White Tiger. Through his struggle, we can know about the miseries of the poor. They have to struggle for their existence. Balram lives in cursing poverty, he has no identity of his own. His family members have no time even to give him any name. He is called Munna by his family and also in school. The school teacher names him Balram. He gets his first identity as Balram in school. But this is not sufficient for Balram. His dreams are different from all other poor people. He thinks differently and at last, he does different. He proves himself different from other students before the inspector who is so much impressed by his intelligence and smartness. He gives him the name White Tiger because he is different from others. The inspector asks him "Which is the rarest animal in the jungle?" Balram resembles the white tiger. Like the white tiger, Balram is rarest among the students. Later he proves that he is the white tiger in the real sense. Here we can see the aspect of retreatism. As his identity changes, the poor boy of Laxmangarh also changes his way of talking and thinking. He also changes his goals and dreams and the means to fulfill them. After becoming a rich man, he changes his attitude completely. We never had a personal relationship with his servants. He does not follow Hanuman or Rama. This is not a trait of a common person. All these things make him a white tiger in the true sense. Balram's granny always reminds him to send money when he lives with Ashok and Pinky Madam in Delhi. She is closer to him; she takes care of him after the death of his mother. But he stops sending money to her after some time. He even does not reply to her letters. As he comes to a poor family, he knows the condition of his family. He is aware of their miseries and needs but he does not care for anything:

All these changes happened to me because they happened first in Mr. Ashok. He returned from America as an innocent man, but life in Delhi corrupted him and once the master of the Honda city becomes corrupted, how can the driver stay innocent (Adiga 116).

Through the novel *The White Tiger* Aravind Adiga reflects India in its two faces – India of light and India of darkness. Dark India is filled with poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, caste system, conflict, social taboos, dowry system and many other evils like them. The whole system is corrupted. Illiteracy is the root cause of the miseries of people. Even the system of government is full of default. The facilities for the poor people are available only in papers but in reality, there is nothing except darkness. Welfare Schemes do not work on the ground level though they do not work better only in papers. People like Balram go to cities in search of work. They have to live there under miserable conditions. By the character of Balram Halwai, the writer tries to depict the reasons which are led people to choose a different way of living. These poor people never become masters. The people, who break the coop of the rooster, he can become. For that, he has to choose what is unique and different from all the members of his group and society. Most people do not courage to choose a way of retreatism. They are deeply connected to the situation of following the previous. But when a person like Balram sees the light of India, he cannot stop himself to choose a different goal and a different way to achieve that goal of success:

See Mr. Akash is giving money to all these politicians in Delhi E so that they will excuse him from the tax he has to pay. And who owns that tax, in the end? Who but the ordinary people of this country. (Adiga 146)

Mr. Ashok continues to move in Delhi from one minister to the other minister for bribing them to escape the Income- Tax. This corruption is present in almost every department such as education and health. It has become a reality in India. Even a teacher does not provide roti and daal to the students and sell the uniforms of students in another village. In the health service centre post of doctors are sold. Corrupted system for the common man to involve in a business related to crime. In the light India where all kinds of facilities are available, here people have the facility of clean water, electricity, medical facilities, employment, education and Justice. In the cities, there is a rapid revolution in the field of science and technology. There is a skyscraper building. Hotel, industry and tourism have come into play. Mall culture has come into the light. But it is light has its darkness. The glare of these big cities becomes the reason for his crimes. There is bribery is in full bloom. The rich are getting richer and the poor poorer. The economic system is not into prospering order. Corruption is present in every field. Balram changes his way. He breaks the boundary of his family and the Society in which he lived. With darkness and come to Delhi and Bangalore. He also breaks the image that a Halwai can also choose a profession other than making sweets. Balram struggles for getting a job after leaving the tea stall. All he learns driving and becomes a driver, after these menial jobs at last he succeeds and becomes *The White Tiger* - that cannot be caged for a long time. He murders Mr. Ashok and steals his money. With the stolen money, He runs to Bangalore and settled as entrepreneur Ashok Sharma. At last, by choosing the way of crime, he gets identity and success in the light. He becomes a successful entrepreneur. In this life of light, we come to know the negative aspect of the big cities, it also highlights the evil effects of globalization. We came to know the struggle of poor people who come to the city in search of a job, there they learn how to break the crate of slavery. The coop of outdated values is the main focus of the novel.

### III.CONCLUSION

As a modern writer, Aravind Adiga presents the situations of the present time in his novels. In today's life stress is a common aspect. It is a part of everyone's life. So, the strain theory of sociology with its aspect of retreatism can be seen in Adiga's different works.

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