



ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVELS OF ARAVIND ADIGA

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ABSTRACT

This paper is dedicated to exploring the art of characterization in the works of Aravind Adiga, one of India's most acclaimed contemporary writers. Aravind Adiga has won several awards for his books, and his works are known for their powerfully drawn characters. Through this study we will analyze and discuss the various techniques Adiga uses to create complex, realistic, and compelling characters. Aravind Adiga is a brilliant writer who has mastered the art of characterization. He beautifully portrays his characters and their struggles in a realistic manner. Adiga presents his readers with characters that are not only relatable but emblematic of the society they belong to. His skillful use of characterization adds depth and complexity to his novels, which make them not only engrossing but also incredibly thought-provoking. This paper intends to highlight geniusness of adiga's in his artistic techniques of characterization and gives a new bend to tha era of Indian writing in English literature. His works reflect his deep understanding of the society and the human condition. Adiga has mastered the art of characterization and used it to create some of the most memorable characters in contemporary Indian literature.

Keywords: - Aravind Adiga, Characterization, Indian Literature, Theme

INTRODUCTION

Aravind Adiga is a really cool writer from India who was born on October 23, 1974, in Madras (now Chennai). He went to school at Columbia University in New York City and is super smart. In 2008, he won a really big prize called the Man Booker Prize for his book called 'The White Tiger'. His writing is all about what's happening in India right now, like the politics and how people are living. Before he started writing books, Adiga was a journalist for a bunch of different newspapers like the Financial Times, Time, and The Wall Street Journal. This means that he knows a lot about what's going on in the world and he uses that knowledge in his writing. The White Tiger is his first book and it's about a guy named Balram Halwai who gets out of being poor by killing his boss and starting his own taxi business. The book is all about how messed up the caste system is in India and how people with power can be really corrupt. His characters are

really interesting because they're not just good or bad, they're complicated like real people. Adiga is really good at making you feel like you're right there in India with his characters. People really like Adiga's writing because it's really good and it talks about important things. He's won a lot of awards for his writing, like the Commonwealth Writers Prize and the PEN/Beyond Margins Award. He's also inspired a lot of other Indian writers to write about what's happening in India right now.

Objectives of the Study:

The primary objective of the art of characterization in Aravind Adiga's work is to provide a nuanced and realistic portrayal of his characters. Adiga's characters are complex individuals with multifaceted personalities and motivations, rather than one-dimensional caricatures. Through his use of characterization, Adiga explores issues such as social class, power dynamics, cultural identity, and personal ambition. His stories often feature characters from marginalized communities who struggle to find their place in a society that favors the wealthy and powerful. By presenting these characters in depth and detail, Adiga challenges stereotypes and prejudices that are often held by mainstream society. Furthermore, his use of vivid imagery and language helps to create a palpable sense of setting and atmosphere, immersing readers in the world he has created. Overall, the art of characterization in Aravind Adiga's work is a powerful tool for exploring complex themes and ideas through compelling storytelling.

1. CHARACTER'S ANALYSIS

a. Character's development:

Character development is an essential element of literature as it allows readers to meaningfully relate to and engage with a story. Developing complex characters creates opportunities for them to grow, change, and face conflict in believable ways that impact the narrative. By creating three-dimensional characters, authors can give readers insight into how people react to situations they may never experience themselves. This emotional connection is critical as it immerses readers in the story and allows them to empathize with the characters' journeys. Well-developed characters also aid in exposing themes and underlying messages within the text, helping readers connect on a deeper level with its purpose. In short, character development is valuable because it combines realism and empathy to create compelling stories that resonate profoundly with audiences.

b. Primary characters in each of Adiga's major works:

Aravind Adiga is a renowned Indian author who has made a significant contribution to the field of literature. He has written several major works that have gained recognition and accolades from around the world. His stories often depict the harsh realities of life in India, exploring themes such as poverty, corruption, and social inequality. In this essay, we will discuss the primary characters in each of Adiga's major works and their significance to the overall story.

1) THE WHITE TIGER (2008) :

Adiga's debut novel, *The White Tiger*, tells the story of Balram Halwai, a poor driver from rural India who rises to become a successful entrepreneur in the city. Balram is portrayed as the anti-hero of the story, engaging in morally questionable actions to achieve his goals. His character is a reflection of the societal and political corruption prevalent in India and serves as an allegory for the country's struggle with poverty and inequality.

2) LAST MAN IN TOWER (2011):

In *Last Man in Tower*, Adiga explores the theme of gentrification and its impact on the working-class community in Mumbai. The protagonist, Masterji, is an elderly teacher who lives in a building that is scheduled to be demolished to make way for a new development. He leads a group of residents who are fighting to keep their homes and resist the temptation of the developers' bribes. Masterji's character represents the struggle of the common man against the forces of greed and corruption.

3) BETWEEN THE ASSASSINATIONS (2008) :

Between the Assassinations is a collection of short stories set in the fictional Indian town of Kittur. The stories are a reflection of the town's social and political landscape and explore themes such as caste, religion, and gender. The characters in these stories are a diverse group of individuals who come from different backgrounds and socio-economic classes. They are a representation of the complexities of Indian society, and each story serves as a microcosm of life in India.

4) SELECTION DAY(2016) :

Selection Day is a novel that revolves around the lives of two young cricket prodigies, Radha and Manju, and their domineering father, Mohan. The story explores the pressures and expectations imposed on these young boys as they navigate the competitive world of cricket. Mohan's character is the driving force behind the story, and his relentless pursuit of success for his sons serves as a commentary on the obsession with achievement and success in contemporary India.

5) AMNESTY(2020) :

Adiga's most recent novel, *Amnesty*, tells the story of an illegal immigrant, Danny, who works as a cleaner in Sydney, Australia. The story revolves around Danny's decision to reveal his status to the authorities after witnessing a crime. Danny's character represents the struggle of the thousands of undocumented immigrants who face exploitation and discrimination in

c. Characters' Motivations, Personalities, And Evolution In Adiga's Works

Aravind Adiga's characters are complex and multi-dimensional, with motivations that are often shaped by their social and economic circumstances. In his novels, Adiga explores the lives of individuals who are struggling to survive in a world that is marked by inequality, corruption, and violence. One of the most striking aspects of Adiga's characters is their personalities. They are often flawed and imperfect, with a range of strengths and weaknesses that make them feel real and relatable. Some of his characters are driven by ambition and a desire for success, while others are motivated by love, loyalty, or a sense of duty. As the stories unfold, Adiga's characters undergo significant evolution. They face challenges and obstacles that force them to confront their own limitations and re-evaluate their priorities. Some characters experience profound personal growth as they learn to overcome their fears and insecurities, while others succumb to the pressures of their environment.

2. Impact of character's role in the story and relationships with others on plot construction.

Aravind Adiga's characters are not just mere players in the story, but they play a crucial role in shaping the plot. Their relationships with other characters have a significant impact on the direction of the narrative. For instance, in "The White Tiger," Balram's relationship with his employer, Ashok, and his family members shapes his decision to escape from servitude and become an entrepreneur. Similarly, in "Last Man in Tower," the residents' relationships with each other and their conflicting interests affect their decision to sell their apartments to a builder. Adiga's characters are not one-dimensional; they have complex personalities that evolve throughout the story. Their actions and decisions have consequences that ripple through the plot, creating tension and conflict. The characters' relationships with each other also reveal deeper themes about society, class, and power dynamics. Aravind Adiga's characters are integral to his storytelling. Their roles in the story and relationships with others affect the plot and contribute to a rich

3. Character Development Techniques:

a) Literary techniques Adiga employs to create powerful characters

One of the literary techniques that Adiga employs to create powerful characters is the use of vivid and descriptive language. Through his use of language, Adiga is able to paint a picture of his characters that is both detailed and nuanced, allowing readers to fully immerse themselves in their world. Another technique that Adiga uses is the development of complex and multi-dimensional characters. Rather than creating one-dimensional caricatures, Adiga's characters are often flawed and contradictory, making them more relatable and human. Adiga also employs the use of symbolism and metaphor to add depth and meaning to his characters. By using these literary devices, he is able to convey complex emotions and ideas in a way that is both subtle and powerful. Adiga often uses dialogue as a means of revealing character traits and motivations. Through their interactions with others, his characters reveal their true selves, allowing readers to gain a deeper understanding of who they are and what drives them.

b) Use of dialogues, setting, and symbolism in character development :

Aravind Adiga is a master of using dialogue, setting, and symbolism to develop his characters. Through the use of dialogue, he is able to reveal the inner thoughts and motivations of his characters. This allows readers to understand their actions and decisions on a deeper level.

Adiga's choice of setting is also crucial in character development. He often sets his stories in India, where social class and economic status play a significant role in shaping people's lives. By placing his characters in these environments, Adiga is able to explore how their circumstances impact their personalities and choices.

Symbolism is another tool that Adiga uses to develop his characters. For example, in "The White Tiger," the white tiger represents Balram's desire for freedom and escape from his oppressive life as a servant. The car that Balram steals also symbolizes his desire for upward mobility and success.

c) Adiga's use of first-person narration, and third-person narration and its effects on characters development :

Adiga's utilization of both first-person and third-person narration has a significant impact on the development of his characters. By employing these distinct narrative styles, Adiga is able to provide readers with a more comprehensive understanding of his characters' thoughts, emotions, and motivations.

Through the use of first-person narration, Adiga allows readers to intimately experience the inner workings of his characters' minds. This technique enables readers to connect with the characters on a deeper level, as they are able to empathize with their struggles and relate to their experiences.

On the other hand, Adiga's use of third-person narration provides readers with a more objective perspective on his characters. This technique allows readers to observe the characters from a distance, gaining a broader understanding of their actions and behaviors. By doing so, Adiga is able to create a more complex and nuanced portrayal of his characters, highlighting both their strengths and weaknesses.

4. Aravind Adiga's employment of themes in characterization :

a. Themes relate to the characters in Adiga's novels :

The novels of Aravind Adiga explore a variety of themes that are deeply intertwined with the characters and their experiences. One major theme is the complexity of identity, particularly in the face of societal pressures and expectations. Characters such as Balram Halwai in *The White Tiger* struggle to find their place in a world that seems set against them, and must navigate their own conflicting desires and motivations in order to survive. Another prominent theme is power – who holds it, how it is gained or lost, and the impact it has on those who wield it. This is seen not only in the dynamic between employers and employees in books like *Last Man In Tower*, but also within families and even individual psyches. Overall, Aravind Adiga's novels offer a nuanced exploration of human nature through vividly drawn characters grappling with complex themes that resonate deeply with readers around the world.

b. Impact of themes on growth, and their overall trajectory of characters:

The themes in Aravind Adiga's novels have a significant impact on the growth and trajectory of his characters. Adiga's works explore complex themes such as social inequality, corruption, and the struggle for power. These themes are intricately woven into the fabric of his stories, shaping the experiences of his characters and influencing their development.

For instance, in his debut novel "The White Tiger," Adiga examines the harsh realities of India's class system through the eyes of his protagonist, Balram Halwai. Balram's journey from a poor village boy to a successful entrepreneur is marked by his struggle to break free from the constraints of his social status. The theme of social inequality is a driving force behind Balram's character arc, shaping his decisions and ultimately determining his fate.

Similarly, in "Last Man in Tower," Adiga explores the corrupt underbelly of Mumbai's real estate industry. The novel follows the residents of a dilapidated apartment building as they are offered a generous buyout by a wealthy developer. The theme of power and greed is central to the story, as the residents grapple with the decision to sell their homes and the consequences that follow.

5. Cultural Context and Characterization of Adigas:

a. Cultural context of Adiga's works :

Aravind Adiga's works are deeply rooted in the cultural context of India, exploring themes such as social inequality, corruption, and disillusionment with modern society. Adiga's writing is shaped by his understanding of the complexities and contradictions inherent in Indian culture. In *The White Tiger*, for instance, he challenges the traditional Indian narrative of success through hard work and persistence by portraying a servant who resorts to murder and deceit to escape his impoverished life. Similarly, *Last Man in Tower* depicts the conflict between tradition and modernity in Mumbai through a group of residents who are offered an exorbitant amount of money to vacate their old apartments for redevelopment purposes. Adiga's deep insights into Indian society are evident in his use of language, symbolism, and characterization – allowing readers to gain new perspectives on contemporary India. Overall, exploring the cultural context of Adiga's works is crucial for understanding his unique voice as a writer and gaining insights into complex issues facing India today.

b. Adiga's characters addresses issues of race, class, and power:

Aravind Adiga's literary works have been lauded for their incisive exploration of complex issues surrounding race, class, and power. In novels such as "The White Tiger" and "Selection Day", Adiga offers a nuanced critique of the Indian social system, highlighting the deep-rooted biases that plague it. He examines the intersectionality of identities to reveal how multifaceted discrimination operates in India's caste-ridden society. By digging beneath surface-level notions of hierarchy based on wealth or prestige, Adiga brilliantly portrays characters who are acutely aware of systemic oppression and its implications for their individual

lives. His writing is notable for its unflinching examination of societal imbalances while giving voice to those typically silenced by marginalization. Overall, Adiga has emerged as an influential author whose works hold up a mirror to the realities of contemporary India while also offering hope for change.

6. Conclusion:

Aravind Adiga is a master of the art of characterisation, using his keen powers of observation and empathy to craft complex and nuanced characters that capture the full spectrum of human experience. In his novel *The White Tiger*, for example, he creates a vivid protagonist in Balram Halwai, a working-class man from rural India who yearns for success and upward mobility. Through Balram's eyes, Adiga portrays not only the harsh realities of poverty and inequality in modern-day India but also the moral compromises that are often necessary to overcome them. Similarly, in his later novel *Last Man in Tower*, Adiga delves into the lives and motivations of a diverse cast of characters as they navigate the murky waters of real estate development and urbanisation in Mumbai. With each new work, Adiga demonstrates an unwavering commitment to exploring the complexities of human nature with skillful insight and unflinching honesty.

7. Final Thoughts And Recommendations For Further Exploration:

Aravind Adiga is a remarkable writer whose works have gained considerable esteem in the literary world. Though his novels have received significant critical attention, there is still much merit in further exploration of his themes and artistic choices. Adiga's novels are predominantly focused on exploring India's political and cultural landscape through the eyes of its vulnerable citizens. His novel *'The White Tiger'* provides an insightful critique of India's neo-liberal economy and the country's caste hierarchy. As such, future studies on his work could examine how he challenges conventional western stereotypes of Indian culture while also presenting some of India's problematic realities. Further analysis could also delve into his intricate constructions of character development, storytelling techniques, and historical contexts employed in his writing. In conclusion, delving deeper into Aravind Adiga's literature can not only expand the understanding of contemporary Indian society but can also advance our knowledge on postcolonial literature as a whole.

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