

## From The Shadows To The Spotlight: The Subaltern In Arvind Adiga's The White Tiger

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### Abstract

Arvind Adiga, one of the most important voices of our time in India, is a literary luminary whose incandescent prose illuminates the complexities of human condition with a stunning clarity and incisiveness. Through his Man Booker Prize winning *The White Tiger*, he has proven himself to be a literary titan, a master craftsman, who weaves together the threads of various themes with skill and finesse. In this novel he raises subaltern issues and unfurls that the subalterns do speak though through crime. The subalterns are those who are oppressed at the hand of upper-class because of their caste, class, age, religion, race, or gender. There are some critics and theorists like Antonio Gramsci, Ranjit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Partha Chatterjee and many others who talked about subalterns in their work. Adiga presents Balram Halwai, the protagonist of the novel *The White Tiger*, who moves from village to city and transforms from a simple village boy to a city entrepreneur and proves that the subaltern can speak. He is a powerful representative of the underprivileged who fight to liquidate old-age slavery and exploitation. The paper underlines how Balram undergoes great trials, troubles and tribulations, which push him towards becoming a business tycoon; how he resolves not to be a rooster in a coop; how he aspires to pull down the cruel walls of class system. The novelist through various characters and incidents

demonstrates that the subaltern can also have strong voices and they can be heard.

**Keywords:** subaltern, marginalization, oppression, voice, consciousness, etc.

## Introduction

Until recently, Aravind Adiga (b. 1974) has authored *The White Tiger* (2008), *Between the Assassinations* (2008), *Last Man in Tower* (2011), *Selection Day* (2016) and *Amnesty* (2020) and “The Sultan’s Battery”, “Smack”, “Last Christmas in Bandra” and “The Elephant,” in which his mind revolves around the issues of the subaltern in changing India, wherein their roles are also changing as they wage a war against every sort of injustice they meet. Some research work has been carried out on Aravind Adiga but many areas, in his work, are still lying unexplored. Aravind Adiga: An Anthology of Critical Essay (2010), a book by P.D. Nimsarkar and Shubha Mishra, focuses on *The White Tiger* and its contribution to altering global perceptions of the current situation in modern India. *The White Tiger* is completely implausible when measured against Indian circumstances, according to Sudhir K. Arora’s book *Aravind Adiga’s The White Tiger: A Freakish Booker* (2011), wherein each of the fourteen chapters reveals how Aravind Adiga presents a naked image of India to Western nations. It also sheds light on how Aravind Adiga uses irony, satire, and paradox to explain cultural, religious, social, and political issues. R. K Dhawan’s *Aravind Adiga’s The White Tiger: A Symposium of Critical Responses* (2011) is collection that provides proof of the overwhelming response to Adiga’s works. The critical analyses presented here also consider India’s value from a social and political standpoint. Ashok Kumar Saini’s *Perspectives on Aravind Adiga’s The White Tiger* (2012) covers many pieces by various authors and discusses the materialistic actions in Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger*. This book examines a variety of recently emerged challenges affecting the broader Indian public. The present paper is a humble endeavor to explore the subaltern issues in *The White Tiger*. Much research work has yet not been done on this issue.

People who are marginalized due to their class, caste, age, religion, race, or gender are referred to as subalterns. Furthermore, it refers to people of lower strata from the

peasantry, from cultural groups that are non-elite, underrepresented, undertrained and non-canonical, and the dominant class's principles affect them directly or indirectly. Originally, the term "subaltern" is used in military to refer to the soldiers who are lower in rank. The Latin words meaning "under" (sub) and "other" (alter) are combined to form the British word "subaltern," which refers to a person of lower military rank. The Italian Marxist thinker, Antonio Gramsci, coins the word "subaltern" to refer to those social groups who lack autonomous political power in a non-military context. The term is now employed to represent all types of people who live on the margins and not receive they owe.

Gramsci first uses the term "subaltern" to describe the proletariat in his renowned book *Prison Notebooks*, wherein he views, the history of the subaltern as complicated as the history of the dominant classes. In addition to having less access to social and cultural institutions, the subaltern class is less likely to be able to control their representation. As the subaltern lack the strategies and means to achieve hegemony, they need intellectuals to guide them. The discussion of subaltern studies is launched by academicians such as Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Dipesh Chakravarty, Partha Chatterjee, Gyan Panday, Veena Das, Gyan Prakash and others. Several volumes on Subaltern Studies have been released since 1982 in an attempt to satisfy historians' desire for information about both colonial and postcolonial subaltern culture.

Under Ranajit Guha's leadership, the subaltern group sought to make sure that the subaltern be heard. Class, caste, age, and gender are all regarded as ways in which subordination is organized in South Asian society. A subaltern, Ranajit Guha describes, is "a name for the general attribute of subordination... whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender, and office or in any other way" (1983, p. vii). According to Guha, people who do not belong to the dominating, governing, or elite groups are considered subalterns. Although, depending on the situation, elites might also behave in subordinate ways.

Guha identifies six key elements in *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983) that historically have made up peasant rebel movements in India and have shown how the peasants have resisted being dominated. Guha and his colleagues significantly contribute to the redefinition of

subalternity. He creates Indian subalternity by remaining silent over Gramsci's use of the word "subaltern." Years of investigation into "history from below" lead to the development of subaltern studies in India. People start thinking about "history from below," which leads to the study of "Subaltern Studies," which gives the voiceless a voice throughout the course of centuries (Ludden, 2002, p. 5).

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak criticizes the notion of the colonial subject in her well-known essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" and offers a case study of the restrictions on how Western speech, especially postcolonial discourse, can engage with different cultures. Her main concern is, whether or not those who have historically been exploited or dispossessed by European colonization, may find a voice. The subaltern voice is only interpreted through an intellectual elitist lens by Spivak as she attempts to stand up for subalterns. Subalterns are relegated to the role of subjects rather than participants. The arguments made by Spivak challenge academicians to acknowledge the limitations of their privileges as intellectuals and economists as they represent the subaltern. Spivak makes clear in her essay, "Can Subaltern Speak?" that they are incapable of speaking. It is common for subalterns as non-ruling class members to be biased by the intellectual elite. In her essay, she highlights that elite intellectual scholars are on privileged positions, allowing them to serve as the spokespersons of marginalized subalterns. A representation like this often gives false impressions about the subaltern class, which is not based on socio-cultural reality. By representing the subaltern group in this way, the privileged elite gain more attention than the subalterns they represent.

Many theorists have discussed subaltern consciousness, as indicated by the above descriptions. Adiga elaborates the consciousness of Balram Halwai, a subaltern character in *The White Tiger* who challenges his masters openly when he becomes aware of his marginalization. Balram Halwai, the protagonist of the novel, tells his story to the Chinese Premier in a letter during his visit to India in the novel. His childhood is spent in a remote village in Bihar called Laxmangarh. As he discusses his life story in the letter, he unlocks his heart and offers a complete picture of his journey from childhood to adulthood to ultimately becoming a wealthy businessman. Like a great realistic narrator, he introduces us to everything, from his rural village in Bihar to the feudal system, poverty, and finally the shining India.

Prostitution, degraded family structures, poor health services, and the Zamindari system are all depicted in the novel. Balram, a son of a rickshaw puller, is called “white tiger” by his school teacher for his exceptional merit and intellect at the beginning of the novel. However, he is forced to leave school and work in a teashop. In order to eke out, he crushes coal and cleans dirty tables in the teashop. He experiences a turning point in his life while driving the car of a son and daughter-in-law of the elite village landlord named Stark. When Balram arrives in the Indian capital and witnesses the city of Delhi, he immediately desires to be wealthy like Mr. Ashok, his master. Balram, makes an effort to uphold the standards of his master by living up to his high expectations. As a counterpart of the subaltern, Adiga makes Balram speak through the act of crime he commits, which is apparently psychological in nature.

During Balram’s exploration of Delhi, he comes across people who have been eaten as well as those who ate. As a white tiger, Balram wants to escape the cage and becomes the part of eaters. In order to live up to the high expectation of obtaining a large belly, Balram chooses to murder his master. In the novel, a turning point occurs when he violently decides to become a free person, transforming into a gentleman or a capitalist counterpart.

He has witnessed Ashok, his master, committing all kinds of corruption and loot, and he has witnessed money being used to buy politicians via gambling. Thus, Balram decides to steal Ashok’s money and kills him. Adiga paints a remarkable portrait of the protagonist who is from the underclass. This is a different application of the Spivak theory through the hero’s character. As Spivak suggests, silence is one of the most important tropes, as well as the positive answer to the question, Can the subaltern speak? which Adiga poses in his novel. Subaltern, in Spivak’s opinion, is equivalent to those whose activities, expressions of power and voices have all been silenced, taken away, or otherwise lost or swept away because their survival is directly impacted by the fact that they can be heard, represented, and most importantly, like Antonio Gramsci, Ranjit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Partha Chatterjee and many others, they are able to be identified. The subaltern classes’ primary characteristics are silence, suffering, and oppression. Although constantly trying to struggle for survival, they are prevented from doing so by their lack of voice. As a result, they are unable to speak for themselves in society. These words can be used to express this:

Since the marginalized have known only the language which has been handed down to them by their exploiters, they should, as Fanon would have probably suggested, use the language of violence at their disposal to give at back and at the same time to continue to deconstruct it from within (Randhawa, 2010, p. 33).

Balram is an excellent example of a man who kills his master to achieve the status he has always dreamed of in order to become a part of the glamorous world. He negates Spivak's concept of subalterns being unable to speak. His marginalization makes it difficult for him to grasp the beauty of life prevalent everywhere. However, he witnesses Ashok's corrupt life and degraded moral character. Despite cruelty, injustice, and humiliation, he cannot go beyond the limits of justice.

Adiga gives a realistic picture of the troubles the subalterns have to face in life. There are several insects and mosquitoes infesting his dwelling place which makes it feel like a dustbin. Following is an overview of the situation: "In the middle of the night...Noises woke me up. The wall was covered with cockroaches...I could see their dark bodies...they kept landing on the net and getting crushed" (Adiga, 2008, p. 131). Balram is being completely exploited and degraded everywhere. Rather than be a "rooster" in a "coop", Balram aspires to join the "eaters" instead of being "eaten" (p. 173). Balram slowly loses patience, justice and humanity in his quest for material wealth and prosperity. His conscience pulls him towards the outside glitzy world as he is seduced by the criminal path to leave the miserable state of his life. In his view, the merchants, elites, and politicians control the government, police, and bureaucracy. As a subaltern in Delhi, Balram Halwai suffers inequality because of his caste, class, and gender. As a result of these injustices, he has a strong desire for retaliation, uprising, and resistance. His father's plan to free himself from his marginalized territorial situation renews his desire to be wealthy. Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak maintains that the subalterns are speechless and they cannot speak. She claims that if the subalterns can talk, then they are not subalterns. In the concluding part of her essay, she answers the question "Can the subaltern speak?" and her answer is "No." A classic example of the darkness of India is Balram Halwai, who suffers at the hand of the upper class. Everywhere, it is found, upper class oppresses the lower class but the marginals can raise their voice once they get a

chance. Balram proves that subordinates can raise their voice as he does by killing his master, Ashok.

Balram is a subaltern who may be capable of speaking but through crime. In the perspective of the law, murder is undoubtedly a horrific act, and no civilized society accepts this kind of behaviour. The author shows, however, that the same person who was marginalized, oppressed, and subaltern - unable to speak - goes on to become a successful entrepreneur, a wealthy man, an entrepreneur, an elite, and even an aristocratic member of society. Balram, after becoming Ashok Sharma, is now a successful entrepreneur based in Bangalore. Throughout his journey from Laxmangarh to Dhanbad, then to Delhi and Bangalore, Balram transforms from innocence to experience, to rootlessness to rootedness, and finally to elite entrepreneur status. The following words summarize his transformation: "All these changes happened in me because they happened first in Mr. Ashok. He returned from America 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?" (p. 197). Balram's murder is an expression of silence that proves a subaltern's ability to speak and to be heard. Balram's account of his unpleasant experiences as a driver goes like this:

You have hours to yourself while waiting for your employer. You can spend this time chit-chatting and scratching your groin. You can read murder and rape magazines. You can develop the chauffeur's habit- it's a kind of yoga, really- of putting a finger in your nose and letting your mind go blank for hours (they call it 'bored driver's asana). You can sneak a bottle of Indian liquor into the car – boredom makes drunks of so many honest drivers. (p. 149).

He knows about every wrongdoing of his master. Since he is his master's servant, he never tells anyone else about his offence. The subaltern classes include the servants, who are unable to express themselves. His rootlessness and dumb condition always make him feel guilty as a result of his slavery and bondage. He makes the decision to kill his master, and even after doing so, he never feels bad about this horrible act. His killing someone is comparable to him shattering the subaltern's silence. He desires to experience the masterly deed "just for a day, just for an hour, just for a minute, what it means not to be a servant" (p.

321). The murder of his master causes him to speak and rejoice. It is a truism that disadvantaged groups are defined by their silence, suffering, oppression, and exploitation as they struggle for survival, self-representation, and voice. Adiga brilliantly captures the voices of the subaltern in *The White Tiger*, including farmers, laborers, unemployed young people, drivers, prostitutes, beggars, and people from lower-class. The protagonist, Balram Halwai, is a true representation of the oppressed who suffer greatly from poverty and impoverishment, despair and quiet, isolation and alienation, as well as subordination and subjugation. Adiga depicts the emerging consciousness of the subaltern in the novel by demonstrating the protagonist's transformation from a poor to wealthy person using cunning business strategies and a desire to help lower-class. Adiga portrays his protagonist as having enormous potential to speak up for the minority through a variety of institutions and positions of authority, demonstrating how sometimes the minority may overcome the most extreme unspeakability.

A subaltern's rebellious consciousness is embodied in the novel. The tragic character of the lower class, Balram, raises his voice to the highest pitch by killing his own trustworthy boss, Ashok Sharma. Balram Halwai lives in a far-flung village full of lower-class people. He is a bright student and a school inspector acknowledges this, who refers to him as "white tiger" (p. 35). The school inspector assures the young lad that he will secure financial aid and appropriate instruction. However, after his father passed away, his family withdraws him from school and employs him at a tea shop. Most significantly, he needs to make money so that he can support the marriage of one of his sisters. He is even given the name Balram by his school teacher, and an official at his school determines date of his birth. Balram leaves his village and moves to Delhi after being hired as a driver by one of landowners of his village named Stork. But he is forced to do other household works also other than driving. Balram thus enters into the world of an endless cycle of dominance and subjugation.

In Guhanian's terms "subaltern" is "a name for the general attribute of subordination... whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender, and office or in any other way" (1983, p. vii). Balram is completely subordinate to his employer when he travels Delhi. Along with his master, Ashok, he also comes to Delhi and witnesses how Ashok bribes the politicians to make their family business survive. His naive country ideas are challenged as



he learns about the vicious city servant network, the contempt of the elite classes, and his outside understandings. Balram describes himself as “half-baked,” like many others who are prevented from completing their education and have only a basic understanding of all subjects (Adiga, 2008, p. 10). The moment he starts working for Ashok Sharma, he loses all of his independence. He always works for the benefit of his boss. The upper-caste people treat him like a dog. The Stork family tries to frame him when Pinky madam, his master Ashok’s wife, kills a child in a hit and drive case. They ask him to take the blame of this murder on himself. These people from upper-caste and upper-class have no sympathy for these downtrodden. They think that these people have no family who cares for them; have no emotions; they are just meant to provide their service to the upper-class people. Finally, after killing his boss and stealing his vast fortune, he establishes the company, White Tiger Drives. So, Balram finally gets out of his lower class and achieves a position he always desires to. He is a subaltern who raises his voice and fights against the elite group.

The condition of the village and villagers also sheds ample light on the position of the subalterns. There are four landlords in Balram’s village, Laxmangarh, whom he refers as four devils of village, who suppress the villagers and burn their houses so that they can roast their eggs. The villagers live at the mercy of these four landlords, who are referred to as the water buffalo, the stork, the wild boar, the raven. The oppression has made the villagers feel so incompetent that they never realize any kind of sensibility or feelings for anyone. The villagers have to live in poor health condition as there is no cleanliness in the part of village where these subordinates reside. The village is filled with filthy things including straw, sagging human body parts, carcasses from dead buffalo and various industrial chemicals. In addition to this, we can also observe broken power poles, broken faucets, and children suffer from various disease, as there is no hospital in the village. The villagers have to go to neighboring village for any kind of treatment and in this hospital also they have to reach after crossing the river. When Balram’s father is suffering from tuberculosis, they take him to the neighboring village hospital, he does not get a bed and moreover there is no doctor to look after the patients. A patient informs Kishan and Balram about the scheme of corrupt government and physicians which avoid any staffing in the village hospitals. Due to doctor’s unavailability, Balram’s father dies. The other setting of the novel is in Delhi,

where the condition of servants, especially, drivers and their place to live raises the subaltern consciousness. The servants have to dwell in the basement of big buildings, which is quite unhygienic. These places are infected with mosquitoes and cockroaches. They are not appropriate to reside. Adiga describes the place in the following words:

I don't know buildings are destroyed in your country, but in India every apartment block, every house every hotel is built with servant's quarters—some time at the back, and sometimes (as in the case of Buckingham tower B block) underground—a warren of interconnected rooms where all the drivers, cooks, sweepers, maids and chefs of the apartment block can rest, sleep and wait. (p. 130)

The characterization itself speaks of subalternity in addition to the setting. A new outfit is only worn on Balram's mother's dead body during its funeral ritual. Balram addresses his mother that she has lived her entire life in misery and poverty:

My father and Krishna, my brother, stood behind her, to bear the front end of the care bed which bore the corpse; my uncles who are Munnu, Jayram, Divyaram, and Umesh, stood behind, holding up the other end. My mother's body has been wrapped from head to toe in a saffron silk cloth, which was covered in rose petals and jasmine garlands. I don't think she had ever had such fine thing to wear in her life. (p. 16)

Here, the condition of the underclass is made quite evident. In the midst of the wealthy, the subaltern must endure struggle, trouble, and suffering. Balram Halwai, who represents the actual voice of the underclass, manages to embrace trade secrets and starts thinking about taking action despite having some absurdities and abnormalities of many kinds.

Adiga reveals the dark side of India, when he speaks about the subjugation of women, which is another point that is raised in the novel. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" says that women are doubly suppressed. First, they are suppressed by colonization and the other by the patriarchal society. They are silenced by both. She says, "If, in the context of

colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (Spivak, 1988, p. 287). Adiga, in this novel, shows through Balram’s mother and through dowry incident that how women are suppressed by men but through the character of Kusum and Pinky Madam, he refutes the idea of Spivak and shows women can break the chains of patriarchal society and can rule over men. The cremation of Balram’s mother is one of the examples of the oppression against women. Only after death she receives the new cloth. One can, through this, imagine what kind of life she has lived. The Indian society confines the role of women to that of obedient mothers, housewives, and daughters, which is evident when the novelist makes the following statement: “Her death was so grand that I knew, all at once, that her life must have been miserable. My family was guilty about something” (Adiga, 2008, p. 16). The connection between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in “India of Darkness” is realistically portrayed (p. 14). The prostitutes, Pinky madam, Balram’s mother, and grandma represent different viewpoints on the status of women in society. Dowry, a common practice in Indian culture, is also evident in the novel. Balram’s family obtains a sizeable loan from the landlord known as “the Stork” so that they can afford a beautiful wedding and a rich dowry for his cousin, Reena. Since the interest rate of the loan is so high, the family’s children are forced to stop attending school and work at the tea shop in order to repay it. Here, the novelist insinuates the callousness and tyrannical attitude of the dominate class.

Sandra Bartky, a feminist author, discusses the alienation visible in *The White Tiger* in one of her book, *Femininity and Domination*, wherein she maintains how in *The White Tiger* women frequently worry about their appearance. The fragmentation of the human being is a component of Marx’s theory of alienation. According to Bartky, patriarchal civilizations also experience some fragmentation of the female population “by being too closely identified with [their body] ... [their] entire being is identified with the body, a thing which... has been regarded as less inherently human than the mind or personality” (1990, p. 130). The mind or personality of a woman is not sufficiently acknowledged because the entire attention is on her physical appearance. Therefore, a woman’s identity is fragmented. A woman, says Bartky, is objectified as a result of this fragmentation.

During Balram's master, Ashok Sharma's meeting with a courtesan, she is described as "she was tall and beautiful, but the most remarkable thing about her was her hair- golden and glossy, just like in the shampoo advertisements ...the fat man said to Ashok Sharma, Go on, touch her hair, it's real" (Adiga, 2008, p. 218).

In the novel, there are two important female characters, Kusum and Pinky madam. The former is Balram's grandmother, who belongs to a lower-class family. Women from lower-class are considered as illiterate, poor in health and economic matters. Indian society is a patriarchal society, where women are not given equal rights to men. Mohanty believes that third-world women "often located as implicit victims of particular cultural and socio-economic systems" (1984, p. 338). Here Kusum, being the member of lower-class and the victim of socio-economic and cultural system, is the subordinate because of her class and gender. But Adiga does not present her as powerless and victim in this male dominated society. She is the head of her family who controls the other members of family, either they are men or women. Balram reveals that she "had grinned her way into control of the house; every son and daughter-in-law lived in fear of her" (Adiga, 2008, p. 16). She has a great control over money and activities of every member of family and all are scared of her. She is supposed to have total control over the family despite being a woman. According to Kuiper, the senior man at home holds the family's power, "The senior male of the household-whether father, grandfather, or uncle-typically is the recognized family head and his wife is the person who regulates the tasks assigned to female family members" (2011, p. 46). Men have positions of authority over women, and a family head's wife simply helps other female members of family with matters of household management. Adiga depicts a strong female character who is more powerful than the family's male members including Balram's brother Kishan, father Vikram Halwai, and Balram himself. As the family's oldest male, Vikram is unable to impose his will on her. He states, "I survived the city, but I couldn't survive the women in my home" (Adiga, 2008, p. 26). This statement shows Kusum as the most powerful woman in the family, and she is able to stand up to her oppression as well as that of the other women.

Ashok's wife, Pinky Madam, is portrayed as a contemporary Indian woman, who has spent a lot of time in America. When she marries Ashok, they first spend some time in

India visiting Ashok's parents before returning to New York. Her beauty is compared to that of an Indian goddess as Balram says, "Now another face appears, to the side of his, in memory's mirror. Pinky Madam-his wife. Every bit as good-looking as her husband; just as the image of the goddess in the Birla Hindu Temple in New Delhi is as fair as the god to whom she is married" (p. 46). It is difficult for Pinky Madam to get along with Ashok's family in Dhanbad as long as she stays with her husband's family. She is defined as a woman who throws temper tantrums. She enjoys spending the day alone in her room and rarely contributes to family gatherings. She also behaves in the same manner as other masters do. She humiliates Balram verbally, as she can speak English fluently, she mocks and laughs at Balram when he tries to speak English words like Mall and Pizza along with Ashok. Pinky Madam is depicted as a woman who uses her social position to control men.

Adiga depicts Pinky Madam's unstable relationship with her husband. Pinky Madam is characterised as a confident woman. Ashok's family forces Balram to sign a paper when Pinky Madam causes a hit-and-run accident in Delhi. Then, it appears that no one informs the police about the incident, meaning Balram will not spend time in jail for what he does not do. Very soon it becomes apparent to her that something is wrong with her husband's family, and she does not feel comfortable around them. She eventually quits her spouse and returns to America in the middle of the night. Here it comes that Pinky also becomes the voice of the voiceless women by deciding to leave her husband and his family. Kuiper asserts "women were expected to treat their husbands as if they were gods, and obedience of wives to husbands has remained a strong social norm" (2011, p. 46). Pinky's departure suggests that the family's norms and values have been compromised. Pinky is depicted as a strong woman with a sense of right and wrong. She leaves as an illustration of how an Indian woman "dares to speak in her own way" (Tyson, 2006, p. 102).

### **Conclusion**

Thus, the subalterns are lower class people who are oppressed, suppressed and subjugated by the upper-class people. In the novel *The White Tiger*, Balram Halwai is the protagonist who is destined to make sweets but becomes a rich entrepreneur, Ashok Sharma. Through Munna's conversion into Balram Halwai and Ashok Sharma, we can trace the rise of the underclass.

Throughout the novel, Adiga masterfully details how Delhi influences Balram's psyche. Balram becomes an entrepreneur in Bangalore due to the suppression and oppression of the subaltern by rich Indians. No matter how he achieves wealth, he is conscious about the subordinates. Poor people in India are completely ignored and isolated by so-called civilized societies. He plans to open schools for them so that the subaltern may be able to attend schools, as he knows the pain of being uneducated as he himself has to leave school and remain uneducated due to his family's needs. His protests, rage, criminal behaviour, and ascent to corporate success serve as warnings to oppressors that the voice of the oppressed cannot be silenced for very long. So, Adiga through Balram makes us understand that the subaltern can speak, they can raise voice for themselves and can change their position. They will be heard also, if the subalterns show some nerve and take a stand.

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