

## *Indianising Literary Criticism*

**Dr Amod Kumar Rai**

Asst. Prof. Deptt. Of English.  
BPG College Kushinagar. U P.  
IUC-Associate, IIAS, Shimla.

T.S.Eliot some eighty years ago in one of his seminal and influential essay 'The Function Of Literary Criticism' stated that criticism is "the elucidation of works of art and the correction of taste." In the same essay he reflected that at present (in 1920s) it was not so much an orderly field of beneficent activity but more a Sunday park of "contending and contentious orators."

This Eliotian belief is more truthful and relevant in the present era than in the early twentieth century. As now we have more contending and contentious orators after the so called theoretical revolution of 1970s. Ironically the revolution fails to establish an ordered, disciplined and a fruitful approach to study literature in general. Literature and criticism are together left in lurch by this revolution. The resultant deluge of theories has made the secondary and informal writing more important than the literary text and more fatally playing the role of a segregationist than an integrationist. Goodheart argues that contemporary criticism has lost its moral authority and modernism is responsible for it. Literary modernism, he argues, "tends to render suspect all privileged positions and thereby, undermines the critical act, which assumes the priority of a particular set of values." Instead of the social, cultural and humanitarian values it is debating power, gender, race, responsibility, sexuality, mind, aporias, ironies et al. Stanley Fish opines that theory has flourished because literary critics have been given the freedom of expression to say whatever they like within the confines of their particular language game and, whether Feminists or Marxists or Deconstructionists, or they can proclaim the death of God, the end of History, the end of Philosophy, the death of the author, the subject, the phallus or whatever until they are restricted strictly. For instance criticism, in Derridian view, is a montage of textures, a release of multiple meanings, a crisis of the mind in motion, a kind of surreal protest against the constraints of moral judgement and systematic thinking. It becomes an intellectual simulacrum for modern life itself. They are, thus, entirely disabled for making good such claims in the world outside the literary academy.

Terry Eagleton in his book 'After Theory' pronounces "the golden age of cultural theory and criticism is long past." Virginia Woolf's oft quoted line that "in or around December 1910 the human nature changed" prompts me to assume that in or around 1970 came the demise of the traditional art of criticism. It was the year when theory revolution exploded. It was the time when theory became a quick-fix template which skirts over incommensurable differences between disciplines. It has become so generalised and its field of application so disparate that what it reveals may come to be only trivially true. The western literary criticism, thus, has gone gradually to dogs and is superseded by theories (the adjective literary is silently removed). These theories have produced nothing but a cobweb in which readers and practioners are sure to be enmeshed. More they try to come out of it the more they wriggle. The worst thing about these theories is that they have divided literary texts into compartments and are contented to deal with any one or two compartments leaving others in lurch. The conformation of one theory entails the refutations of other. It is this dismal state of criticism in west that encourages me to design and formulate INDIAN LITERARY CRITICISM.

A comprehensive and compact paradigm of literary criticism that may deal with all the desirable and essential qualifications of a literary text is needed today. Discourses on the disparate sociological, linguistics, semantic, generic and narrative aspects, in itself, of a literary text are not sufficed. One must not miss the very cardinal fact that literature is a progeny of human intellect. It in turn is formed and shaped by numerous affecting factors. Literature is neither totally language nor merely meaning nor a manifestation solely of some cultural-socio-historical document but carries with it ingredients from all aspects of human life. The aforementioned paradigm of literary criticism will avail a step by step procedure to analyze, to evaluate and to elucidate a text.

In this paradigm of Indian literary criticism I suppose to introduce:

- Firstly the meaning and function of criticism.
- To validate the exploration of the literary texts as the sole objective of criticism.
- To determine what literature in general and a literary text in particular is.
- To propagate the purpose and causes of literary writing.
- To determine the different constituents of literature.
- Finally projecting a feasible model for the interpretation of the literary text.

### Meaning and Function of Criticism:

Literature is a mimetic practice whose primary purpose is to produce an accurate representation of its object and criticism is an endeavour to catch how correctly that imitation is done. It may be conceived then easily what literature is to life, criticism is to literature. Literature inspects life and criticism inspects literature. Criticism, therefore, is a broader discipline but indeed not the greater. Although criticism is different from theories, yet it is not without theories. Criticism is practice as in practical criticism; it seems intuitively to be more fundamental and authentic activity. Theory is simply how you talk about, organise and reflect upon what you have been doing as a critic; a kind of appended metalanguage which takes critical practice as its object. The Indian *manishis* of the past have emphasised much on this legislative and dogmatic aspect of Poetics or to be more precise *Kaṅvyashaṅstra*.

Like the western Poetics, *Kaṅvyashaṅstra* too studies the various forms, techniques and resources of literature and seeks to define its nature and function. Over the centuries *Kaṅvyashaṅstra* has passed through several detours and has extended its range much wider than its western counterpart Poetics. From Bharata to Panditraj Jagganath the Indian scholars have eyed from the most important to the minutest particle of literary creativity. *Kaṅvyashaṅstra* is concerned with making and interpretation of literary texts. Being trained in such *Kaṅvyashaṅstra* an ideal reader or a critic questions the text in hand. This questioning itself is criticism. It never takes a writer or his work for certain. A critic's questions are basically regarding the content, dialogue, character, style, culture, image, landscape, and message and of course about values, the literary text tries to establish. Krishna Rayan insists much on these intrinsic elements in the text that are relevant for interpretation and evaluation. The extrinsic elements like the philosophical, socio-political and theological dimensions of the text may render digressions in readers emotional response i.e. *rasa siddhi*. To say it more precisely criticism, in Indian *Kaṅvyashaṅstra*, subjects everything to closest scrutiny. Criticism doesn't adjudge a work of art as simply good or bad but rather it highlights where the excellencies or the positivities of the text rest, and where it lacks literariness/*kaṅvyaguna* or exposes the inadequacies of the writer. To sum up criticism, as Leavis also believes, is a step in the larger process of education which in turn is but a step in the promotion of human living and culture.

### **Validating the exploration of a literary text as the sole objective of criticism:**

To listen once again T. S. Eliot “The greatness of literature can’t be determined solely by literary standards; though we must remember whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards.” In this Eliotian proposition there are two things to concentrate upon-(a) the greatness of literature and (b) literature. The greatness of literature defies all literary canons. It transcends the barriers of rules. Dr. Johnson applauds Shakespeare who flouted classical rules of three unities. His dramas capture the emotion and imagination of his audience. He succinctly makes them laugh, weep, angry, nostalgic, compassionate etc. He wrote to satisfy the general taste and appetite of his audience. This is the only itinerary to greatness. A great writer transcends all canonical, social, cultural and religious ideologies and abides by humanitarian values in his work. A literary work of art, in its entirety, is therefore a self-sufficient entity. S. K. De points out that Sanskrit literary theory fails to relate the textual features to the poet’s imagination (*kavi-vya□pa□r*) and personality (*kavi- swabha□va*). But what De regards as the chief failing of Sanskrit poetics is in fact its chief strength. Sanskrit/Indian theory focuses on the observable formal elements in the work, analysing them in relation to the reader’s response; and it marginalised the creative imagination and the author’s life, psychology, philosophy etc. as factors external to the experiencing of a work. The critic’s chief project then is to identify as far as possible the normal affective response to the work, to examine each of the objective elements in it, to analyse their interaction among themselves, and to evaluate their effectiveness as suggestors of the reader’s emotion which constitutes the meaning of the work. Therefore a critic should look into the text how it captures reader’s emotions and imaginations and satisfies his emotional hunger. If the reader negates his own real world and is engrossed in the fictive world of the author, then only the work will be considered a great work. For realising the greatness of the work one has to surrender himself completely to the text forgetting author’s biography, ideologies and even history. Rayan prescribes the same “A literary work has to be read as a literary text, and when it is so read, any connection which it may be found to have with the author’s personal history will be seen as an extra- literary factor and will be of no interest to the reader.” Thus the literary text itself should be made the prime objective of critic’s interest. The critic must possess the knowledge of literary standards because by only this he can differentiate between a literary and non- literary text.

### **Determining literature:**

Coincidentally the occidental and the oriental, to be more precise Aristotelian and Bharat’s notions were framed largely in regard of drama. It was because drama in their time was the dominant and most representative of all forms. Later many other forms notably poetry, epic, novels, stories etc came into existence. Irrespective of all their different structures and forms here I take up literature as a collective term for all its variants. The differentia of literary discourse as opposed to ordinary or standard discourse has been variously identified in terms of such opposition as: fiction/truth, emotive/referential, aesthetic/ utilitarian, deviation/norm. But literariness is best described as defined by the dominance of unstated, implied meaning. Dhvanya□loka, the 9<sup>th</sup> century Sanskrit classic of literary theory, asserts “*ka□vyasya□tma dhvanih* i.e. suggested meaning is the essence of poetry/literature. Paul De Man, one of the founding fathers of Anglo-American Post- structuralism rejuvenates the same when he declares that he “would not hesitate to equate the rhetorical, figural potentiality of language with literature itself.” The *Vyanga□rth/ va□cya□rtha* in Dhvanyaloka correspond to suggested/ stated or denotation/connotation in English. A work of literature is one which teaches or shows us a way of living, ordered and patterned in accordance with some ideal

of a civilised community. Even the slightest deviation from this pattern is sufficed to inspire an author to write. Human life consists of the interplay of different emotions or *rasas* viz. love, humour, mercy, anger, valour, fear, hatred, wonder and calm. When he sees the same interplay of emotions in a fictive world of literature, he begins to identify himself with the character. He derives a sense of pleasure and satisfaction. He supports the protagonist in his venture to put things in order or to punish the guilty. Literature stirs and moves its readers. Bhattanayak refers to such power of literature as *sa-dhrnikaran*. It means an empathetic and sympathetic sharing with the character on the stage or in the pages. It follows therefore that literature is not just an aesthetic experience but one dictated by the writer's profoundest interest in life. With this profoundest interest come universal and eternal values. Only that literature matters vitally that pleases always and pleases all. Periodical pieces can appeal to a particular region in a particular time but great literature is inexhaustive. Literature's prime objective should neither be purely to praise nor to totally condemn its age. It should afford to common men the highest kind of pleasure or the ideal position in which he can mould himself.

#### **Aims of literary writing:**

Literature manifests the entire spirit of its nation from the beginning to the present and even to its future prospective. It shapes and preserves the cultural heritage of the nation. It formulates the viable and flourishing milieu for the human race. Our ancient scholars like Bhamaha, Kuntaka, Kshemendra, Keshav Mishra, Dandi and many other assert the ensuing *ka-vya-prayojans* or objectives of creative writing--- fame, worship, faith, covetousness, benefit, getting the desirable, abandoning the ill and lastly knowledge. Mammata is more precise in determining the aim of literary writing. To him material gain and inculcation of practical knowledge among common folk should be the prime motto of a poet. Addison and Steele's 'The Spectator' is a brilliant example of such literary writing. Their periodical essays teach a common man from how to wear a cap to how to appreciate Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. With affording pleasure literature must impart a sound judgement among the readers regarding dos and donts. Although the ancient ideals are very high such as the concept of *purúsha-rtha chatustaya* yet we have to abide by it because there is no alternative to it. Even today the ultimate aim of literary writing is fame, material gain, craving to maintain the order and to attain salvation by serving people.

Some other stimuli determine the creation of the literary text besides all abovementioned objectives. Some of them are called *ka-vya-hetoo* or literary catalysts. How does a magnum opus of a writer born? What are those special attributes of a writer that creates an everlasting impression on the psyche of so many? Answers to such questions will reveal these literary catalysts. These are ingenuity, an uncanny power in poet which creates the new vistas and renew the old and everyday life, wide knowledge, dexterity and incessant practice. To this may be added a fourth one religious faith. Milton in his prose writing has suggested the literary aspirants to cultivate all these four traits. Mammata considers only the first three to be essential for making a great poet. Matthew Arnold's conviction, too, is worth mentioning here-----

“A literary masterpiece is produced when two powers conquer at in argument union, one is the power of man and the other is the power of moment.”

Often the writer is provoked to write by his surroundings. Arnold himself is an excellent example of it. His poetry is imbued with unfathomable melancholy because he is distressed to see the loss of religious faith in his age. Recently awarded with the coveted Booker award Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* is another example of this theory. The book seems to be produced as a result of the writer's discontentment with the current milieu of India.

### Determining the different constituents of literature:

Now in this unprecedented deluge of literary works only a handful of works survive. These works survive because it does possess some of the literary merits or to say *kaṅvya-guna* in Indian tradition. A literary work consists primarily of two things—(1) content or ideas and (2) expression of ideas or suggestiveness or the stylistic features of it. Otherwise we can say it the semantic or linguistic are the two aspects of a literary text. The meaning of a work is not what the author intended nor what the work may be said to contain but what the reader produces. The reader's act of responding to the work is the same as his act of producing its meaning. "The meaning of a work is the reader's experience of it", so says Norman Holland. In Sanskrit theory the *sahrdāṅya* (the competent reader or spectator) is also called *saṅmaṅjika* (member of the community). Reader's emotional responses are not solipsistic or inviolably personal but are determined by the implicit system of codes and conventions of reading internalised by them. The community consensus and the page with the marks on it are effective constraints on any impressionism or idiosyncrasy resulting from the reader's freedom to produce meaning. Within a culturally homogeneous community, largely the relationship of the object to the emotion is marked by constancy and uniformity, being cultural items; they have a shared meaning for members of a group. A. K. Ramanujam coins a term "correlative objects", in contrast to "objective correlatives" of T. S. Eliot, in order to show that the former are "given by the culture" and latter are "sought and found by individual poets."

Indian literary masters have told certain literary merits for both the aspects. Pt Keshav Mishra ascribes five literary merits to each—words and its meanings. Words should be precise, sublime, sweet, terse and emotive (using one word to function multiple actions). Easy revelation, euphemism (harsh and strong things said less harshly) syntagmatism and suggestiveness are the four *gunas* ascribed to meaning. However these two broader divisions of literature in thematic and stylistic section can be further divided in more sub-categories. Like in a drama, novel or a story the idea or the story develops through a plot. The plot develops the projection of a character. Character presents the spectacle and interacts through dialogues. In the background to character the literary text has an internal ambience of its own in which the character and situations are framed, it is landscape or locale equally important as character or narrative. Landscape in its most inclusive sense can be said to mean any environment presented in the text, not excluding townscape and perhaps even the indoor scene. The urban landscape is in fact, an important component in certain texts but in certain other texts landscape in its strict sense i.e. physical nature discrete from and discontinuous with the human world are the dominant factor. Landscape can be presented simply as a thing of beauty, can be compared with the character's mood or situation, human emotions can be ascribed to the landscape with pathetic fallacy. Recounting other necessary ingredients is inconsequential because I am talking about literature in general. Therefore discussions about generic attributes will certainly blur my objectives. Character, undeniably, is the next most inevitable asset of literature. Now it is in the form of a character and then in the form of a narrator that the author voices his ideas. This character should be judged by the idea he represents and the action he upholds. But a critic must be on his guard while judging a character and maintains the distinction between *homo fictus* and *Homo sapiens*. A character is one of the suggestors or *vibhaṅvas* (either an *aṅsraya* or an *aṅlambana*) of the *rasa*. A character is no more than a part of the design of a particular arrangement of words which we call a text and it can only function as an element in the text. Forster's taxonomy of round and flat characters are compatibly applicable to the cluster of characters. Among there is one main character who is the protagonist or *Nayak*. He is the focused and ideal character. He is the glimpse of the writer's vision of an ideal man. It is

he who's suffering, victories, grief and struggle is most felt by readers. Therefore the protagonist must be an ideal man devoid of petty shortcomings. He should be grand, imitable and exemplary. He must be sacrificing, sweet, clever, brave, helping and impartial. In Indian Kaavyashastra there are four kinds of *Nayak*—*Anukul*, *Dakshin*, *Shatha* and *Dhrista*. Anukul Nayak remains faithful to his first love/wife. Dakshin Nayak is one who despite affection for other women doesn't corrupt himself. Shatha entertains and enjoys his multiple affairs including his own heroine. The Dhrista knowingly and openly relishes his illicit rapports. Likewise heroines are also of four kinds--- *Anudha*, *Swakiya*, *Parkiya* and *Padangna*. Swakiya is the best heroine being most beautiful, shy, modest, witty and respectful.

Above all it should be made crystal clear that literature can be philosophical but not philosophy. It isn't solely an agency of moral guiding. Literature contains neither pure truth nor falsehood. If literature doesn't make a better person, it does criticise our way of living. It enlarges mind, give thoughts and insights that last forever. John Carry suggests that "literature's function as a mind developing agency gives it special relevance in our present culture." Despite all oddity, uncertainty and difficulty of the present era, literature shouldn't reflect it as it is, like a mirror does. But it is imitation which recreates and its sole duty should be to propagate the beauties and the positivities of life.

#### **An Indian Paradigm for literary criticism:**

Since in India literary creativity is supposed to aid in the attainment of four noble deeds (*purusha-rtha chatustaya*) for the writer, the critic must see first of all how much the concerned literary work stir our emotions and consequently drag us to social, religious, cultural and humanitarian aspects of the country. Which is the preponderant emotion or mood throughout the text? The second relevant task of the critic is to examine whether that literature keeps us in touch with the beauty of the world or simply exposing the vulnerabilities. The work must bring us into contact with our best selves and make us opposing the injury. Thirdly the critical expert should observe that the work must be offering a solution if it takes up a crisis for its theme. In other words it should establish poetic justice in the end. The power and the appeal of the text are to be highlighted. Most importantly a critic must occupy himself in finding how many literary merits or *kaavya guna* it preserves. Evaluation, withal, incorporates determining how effective the objective features of the work- its imagery, plot etc. are as suggestors of the readers emotions, how far they are in accord with it. Accord denoted by the term "decorum" is tantamount to *aucitya* in Sanskrit. Deficient accord will be called in Sanskrit theory a *rasa dosa*, a flaw in the presentation of emotion. Then the work should also be put to a stylistic test foregrounding its technical features. These questions will certainly compel readers to read and reread the text and this recurrent reading will flash the inherent beauties of the text.

It's in our hands then to save literature from further compartmentalisation and to re-establish the entirety and integrity of literature. Neither only thematic, nor merely semantic, nor solely linguistic and of course nor any ideology is sufficed to cultivate the value and power which together they fuse in a literary work. A critic must conform that literature is a social and cultural phenomenon and it must not be narrowed by making it a vehicle for some particular agendas viz. feminism, Marxism, Lesbianism et al.

#### **The White Tiger: An Elucidation**

All literary texts are meant, ultimately, either to establish a kind of order or to attack the disorder preponderant in its contemporaneous time. Aravind Adiga's 'The White Tiger', the Booker prize winner of 2007, appears to be both in an entirely novel way. The existing reality of the present day India is exposed while developing the illuminating but utterly amoral story of Balram Halwai or the 'white tiger' of the title.

While the plot lays down Machiavellian ethics for attaining material success, it also unveils a new visage of the country, a visage that may be unexhilarating and debilitating for the chauvinistic lovers of the country. Adiga is an innovative and phenomenal talent to watch and enjoy. He develops the plot in an unprecedented way mixing the past with the present with an eye on future. He does so with a brilliant use of flashback technique with intermittent commentaries. The complete story runs over the course of seven nights in which Balram describes his journey from the darkness of the village to the entrepreneurial success. But the most marvelling point of the novel is the mingling of fiction with verisimilitude.

The protagonist Balram Halwai, who has been dubbed as the 'White Tiger' by the inspector of education because of his little more knowledge than his colleagues in the school, is the son of a rickshaw puller but he is too sentient for his class. Although he is deprived of formal schooling and education yet he continues to learn by having an exceptional observant eye to his surroundings. Beginning with crushing coals and wiping tables at a local tea shop at Laxmangarh, his native village, he manages to find his haven in Dhanbad in the family of the Stork, a rich landlord from his village. The Stork has two sons Mr. Ashok and Mr. Mukesh. Ashok is an America returned and educated Indian and is uncorrupted by the modern culture of the country. Mukesh is in starkest contrast to Ashok and handles Balram as a servant than a man. Balram, outwardly a loyal, honest and faithful servant but inwardly a restless aspirant for doing better in life, kills the innocent Ashok and grabs his money with which he opens a whole 'brave new world.' He doesn't allow his predestined servitude to last because he detests being a straggler. This seemingly simple plot unravels itself through many intricacies. The novel assumes the format of a bildungsroman (a novel of formation or education) as it narrates the development of the protagonist's mind and character from childhood through varied experiences to maturity and the recognition of his role in the world.

As aforementioned the book seems to establish new ethics, inevitable to success, diabolical in nature, i.e. the way to success leads through spilling a little blood, a little trickery and a determination to try forbidden ventures. It is a reiteration of the ancient Indian ethics of *matasyanya*—*ya*. Simultaneously the book attacks the disorder prevalent in contemporary India. The cultural codes in the book appear murky and bleak. The educative system, the working of officials, the polluted Ganges, the sick hospitals, the corrupt administration and politics, the cunning and astute police almost everything that constitute the present day India are put forth in its naked reality.

'The White Tiger' is an eye-opening and revealing text. It shatters the professed and traditionally acknowledged ideas about the glorious and highly praised Ganga, the river of emancipation. Taking a dip in it once in life is an unwritten but inevitable law for an average Indian if he has to undo all his sins. But Balram warns Mr. Jiabao—

"I urge you not to dip in the Ganga, unless you want your mouth full of faces, straw, soggy parts of human bodies, buffalo carrion and seven different kinds of industrial acid."

He further describes the filthy Ganga in the holy city of Banaras. Such is the existing veracity of Ganga. Children start making their carriers at schools and it is where they are first exposed to corruption. The government plans to provide education with free food, uniforms, scholarships and many other amenities to students. The plan is made and endorsed but it never reaches its target. The author reveals the snobbery, hypocrisy and falsity of a headmaster of a school in a mocking and teasing way-

"The teacher had a legitimate excuse to steal the money; he said he had not 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---. Yet he

was terrified of losing his job, because the pay of any government job in India is very 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 neighbouring village.”

Adiga’s acumen regarding the function of police in India is highly praiseworthy. When Balram has to start up his business venture of taxies in Banglore he bribes the police and uses it in accordance with his planning. Bribed by Balram the police first raid the other taxi owners of the city for lacking driving licence and other papers. Secondly the police placate the angry brother of a dead in an accident caused by one of Balram’s drivers. The police act according the class of the victim as the author says—

“A man on a bicycle getting killed the police don’t even have to register the case. A man on a motorbike getting killed they have to register the case. Man in a car getting killed- they would have thrown me in jail.”

Apart of the thematic concern the stylistic front of the work is also highly commendable. The technical dexterity of Adiga marvels the readers beyond their expectation. He is at home in revealing even the complex inner turmoil of Balram in easy and simple syntaxes. Creating suitable metaphorical utterances in the mind of the protagonist is Adiga’s forte. In his external behaviour and duties Balram never gives even the slightest clue of his contrivances. The writer beautifully even effectively externalises his inner conflict between the good and evil self of Balram. Once Balram is driving his master Ashok somewhere in Delhi when in a traffic jam he sees two puddles of paan spit assuming the shape of two Balrams talking to each other---

The left hand puddle seemed to say:	The right hand puddle seemed to say:
1. Your father wanted you to be an honest man.	1. Your father wanted you to be a man.
2. Mr. Ashok doesn’t hit you or curse you like people did to your father.	2. Ashok made you take the blame when his wife killed the child on the road.
3. Mr. Ashok pays you well, 4000 rs a month. He has been raising your salary without even your asking.	3. This is a pittance. You live in a city. What do you save? Nothing.
4. Remember what the buffalo did to the servant’s family. Mr. Ashok will ask your father to do the same to your family once you run away.	4. The very fact that Mr. Ashok threatens your family makes your blood boil.

The book profoundly displays certain literary merits. The diction of the text is suggestive, emotive, simple and off and on euphemistic too. The best euphemistic expression in the text, I find, is the expression “to dip the beak in someone” and “arousing of the beak” for erection. The *Nayak*, protagonist, doesn’t conform to any of the category. He is a common man and perfidy is his forte. The type of his character has no antecedent. He is the first character who mockingly reveals the zeitgeist of the present India where he swims in the same tide. Instead of having heroic qualities, he possesses villainous scheming which he practices not against any individual antagonist but against all who comes in his way. Morally he may not be ideal and an imitable but his dazzling success is a tempting one. His story of triumph postulates that the present day crises in India can be tackled only by being corrupt. It is indeed an ominous pitfall.

While *The White Tiger* exposes India's fake attitude and unconcern with much of the glorious assets in our culture as Balram proposes to eliminate God and Gandhi from the school he is going to launch—

“A school where you won't be allowed to corrupt anyone's hand with prayers and stories of God and Gandhi --- nothing but the facts of life for these kids.”

It does praise the economical boom in the country. Adiga predicts that the coming time will be purely of China and India—“My humble prediction is in twenty years time it will be just as yellow men and brown men at the top of the pyramid, and we will rule the whole world.”

It is indeed hard to praise such a character who justifies his act of murder in the end by comparing it to numerous murders done by the politicians----“kill enough people and they will put up bronze statues to near parliament house in Delhi..... But that is a glory, and not what I am after. All I wanted was the chance to be a man---and for that one murder was enough.”

The book does make us feel what we were once and what we are now. Adiga deserves absolute praise for it.

### Works Cited

- T. S. Eliot, *The function of Criticism, Tradition and Individual Talent*, Selected Essays 1928, OUP.
- F. R. Leavis, *Culture and Environment*, 1933, OUP. *Scrutiny*, Vol. 1, No.1, 5, 1932.
- Terry Eagleton, 1. *After Theory*, 2. *Literary theory: An Introduction*, both Blackwell, 2002 and 2003.
- Stanley Fish, *Is There A Text in The Class? The Authority of The Interpretive Communities*. Harvard University Press, 1980.
- M. Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, Second Series, Macmillan, 1937.
- John Carry, *What Good Are The Text?*, 206, 2006, OUP.
- Elain Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, 86, 1999, Princeton University Press.
- Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger*, 2008.
- M.A.R. Habib, *Modern literary Criticism And Theory*, 2008 Blackwell.
- Patricia Waugh, *Literary Criticism And Theory*, 2006, OUP
- Bharatmuni, *Natyashastra*, ed by B.L. Shastri, Cowkhamba Sanskrit Sansthan.
- Bhagiratha Mishra, *Bhartiya Kavyashastra*, Radha Publication.
- Rayan Krishna, *Sahitya, A Theory*, Sterling publication Pvt. Ltd., 1991.
- De Man, Paul, *Allegories of Reading*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1975.
- Holland Norman, *Readers Reading*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1975.
- Ramanujam, A. K., Tr. *Poems of Love And War*, Delhi, OUP. 1985.