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Adiga illustrates the rooster coop syndrome kaleidoscopically in this fiction, while *collective consciousness* forms the moral basis of the society. It is the very seed thru which grows the offshoot of *herd mentality*. The Rooster coop spreads its tentacles in the collective consciousness of villagers of Laxmangarh.

Keywords: rooster coop, caged minds, herd mentality, collective consciousness, the white tiger, aravind adiga.

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Adiga illustrates the rooster coop syndrome kaleidoscopically in this fiction, while *collective consciousness* forms the moral basis of the society. It is the very seed thru which grows the offshoot of *herd mentality.* The Rooster coop spreads its tentacles in the collective consciousness of villagers of Laxmangarh. The key is the fear, the terror of Landowners in the villages, caged their minds, gaged their tongues, and made them prisoners in their own homes. The only panacea that exists to contain this herd syndrome is the rationalized thinking and fear-free mind of every individual.

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I. Introduction

"Where the mind is without fear and the head held high. Into that, the heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake". – Rabindranath Tagore (1)

Aravind Adiga wrote this Man Booker prizewinner novel, sixty years after India got independence, after the long trails of the freedom struggle that last century. Our ancestors sacrificed their lives on the promised of our leaders and harbingers of freedom movements. In free India, there will be in distinguish and indiscriminate progress in education, health, infrastructure, irrigation, roads, railways, agriculture, employment, and electricity. Our first prime minister on the eve of Independence spokes,

> "When we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance-we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India-means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity." (2)

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India is a sovereign nation in letter and spirit but the subsequent governments of free India in various periods fail either in these endeavors or in lag behinds.

Adiga's '*The White Tiger*' is an antithesis to all the promises and pledges that our leaders made on the eve of Independence. The masses in the interior of India were either unable to catch the train of progress in free and democratic India or the upper class elbow them out of its compartments. The masses of India are in-caged mentally in feudal passé and divides along within many castes and communities. These partitions are too strong that it sucks in the democracy of our nation within itself. Citizen in India does not cast their votes but votes along the castes lines. Castes politics exists in all the political parties; hence, democracy partially fails in India.

Adiga's fiction is in direct opposition to the concept of freedom, fraternity, equality progress, democracy, and the very soul of our constitutional philosophy and directives. The Republic of India's constitution, which advocated the transformation of all feudal social order towards a rapidly industrialize advanced nation, lay buries deep underneath the communal politics of the state.

> "Thanks to all those politicians in Delhi, on the fifteenth of August, 1947-the day the British left-the cages had been let open; and the animals had attacked and ripped each other apart and jungle law replaced zoo law. Those that were the most ferocious, the hungriest, had eaten everyone else up and grown big bellies. That was all that counted now, the size of your belly." (Ibid. 38)

'The White Tiger', is a piece of literature or art, besides also document information on the diminishing function of successive state's organs. It is the story of cages built by the major players of this fiction for themselves and others. The gate to salvation is close to these souls; hence, they are live mausoleums of the self. Indian folks suffer from the *Rooster Coop Syndrome*; it is an offshoot of their caged minds. It is the tale of protagonist Balram Halwai who transformed from a mere village bump to a car driver and rapid rise to an entrepreneur in the most unconventional methods. It is the saga of poverty, depravity, paucity, usury, bonded child labor, corruption, bribery, retribution, slaying, and slavery. Adiga states in *The White Tiger*, "The story of a poor man's life is written on his body, in a sharp pen." (Ibid. 17)

Adiga illustrate the rooster coop syndrome kaleidoscopically in the below-cited paragraph,

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> "Hundreds of pale hens and brightly colored roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in a belly, pecking each other and shitting on each other, jostling just for breathing space; the whole cage giving off a horrible stench-the stench of terrified, feathered flesh…. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop..." (Ibid. 173)

Adiga defines this syndrome as a general deprivation of rebellion in creatures of a coop. The loss of will power to be free, even though there exists a way to escape the coop. In-coop creatures watch the brutal extermination of their fraternity and patiently wait for their turn. Besides, out of servitude to their invisible masters, they guard the fellow-creatures, Adiga calls it '*guarded from the inside'*, this is the dangerous and famous traits founds in Indians, they pull the legs of one another, that progresses, or tries to escape the coop, and this is the major reason of the backwardness and others ailments of our nation.

> "The Rooster Coop was doing its work. Servants have to keep other servants from becoming innovators, experimenters, or entrepreneurs. The coop is guarded from the inside." (Ibid.115)

According to Emile Durkheim (3) in '*The Rules of Sociological Methods*,' wrote on the collective conscience of the community, "The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or common consciousness." While *collective consciousness* (i.e., norms, beliefs, and values) forms the moral basis of the society. It is the very seed thru which grows the offshoot of *herd mentality,* which is equally efficacious in animals and humans. The Rooster coop spreads its tentacles in the collective consciousness of villagers of Laxmangarh, they know their rights to vote and to form the government, still, nobody has ever voted in his entire life, Although India is a republic for the last sixty years. The key is the fear, the terror of Landowners in the villages, caged their minds, gaged their tongues, and made them prisoners in their own homes. The Stork expresses in *'The White Tiger,'* "We'll even fuck your wife for you, Balram!," only a man who is prepared to see his family destroyed, hunted, beaten, and burned alive by the masters can break out of the coop." (Ibid. 177)

Adiga as an author, shown to these villagers that the way out of the coop exists and is always open before them; he cites poet, Iqbal. "I was looking for the key for years but the door was always open." (Ibid. 267) Still, these villagers cannot give birth to their courage, though collectively, they are more powerful than landowners are due to their large population. Landowners understand the impact of numbers in democracy, and out of this sheer fear, they terrorize them. The landowners clubbed all the political power within themselves and brutally crushed the villagers, socially, politically, morally, financially, ethically, and civically. Tagore (1) in his collection of poetry '*Gitanjali*', prayed for fearless minds of his countrymen because fear is the fundamental key to the caged minds. In landowners, there exists the fear of class domination, caste subjugation, land takeover, political annihilation, tax reforms, financial interference, and nationalization of excess assets. It is like a ride on the back of the tiger; if they demount, the tiger will make them its feed. They need to demount to feed themselves; they trap themselves in catch two-two situations.

Adiga in *The White Tiger* successfully portrays an underdog Balram as a protagonist or an antagonist and a nameless wretch in the gruesome tale of deception, ambition, blackmail that accumulates in a murder. The lead character is of village bump Balram, who is an illiterate car driver working for his landowners. Adiga wrote this novel in epistolary forms, as seven letters from Balram to Wein Jiabao, the Chinese Premier,

> "Neither you nor I can speak English, but there are some things that can be said only in English," goes the first line of Balram's first letter to Wen Jiabao." (4) (Ibid. 03)

Balram is a keen imbiber of the English that spokes in the back-seat of his car; he listens and absorbs as his master spokes this language. In later years, this intelligence he gathers guides him in conducting his enterprise competently.

> "I am not an original thinker-but I am an original listener." (Ibid. 28)

Ironically, he is not able to speak English and he presumes similar is the case with the Chinese Premier. "This inconsistency in reasoning bear witness to a larger point that Adiga wants to certify about the stanch global aspirations of a local underdog."(5)

Adiga's narrates *The White Tiger* through Balram Halwai, who acts as the sole narrator, though he is reconnoiter, to avoid native dialect interference in the narrative medium. Adiga allegedly construes English in the narrative, the views of a man devoid of any education at least the English.

The White Tiger has all the ingredients of a thriller except that the revelation of the murderer-"*I slit Mr. Ashok's throat*" (Ibid. 42)-comes in the very first chapter of the book and the plot moves on consequently, inevitably, and un-predictably towards exposure, and followed the expedient resolution. In '*A Glossary of Literary Terms,*' M.H. Abrams (6) recognizes a vital aspect of the dramaturgical soliloquy when he identifies the narrator spoke solo; he normally remained un-aware that he spoke out his deep guarded veracities. Balram Halwai is one of the literature's chicken-hearted narrator, aware and cognizant of a cause, and an unmindful, remorseless and self-centered criminal.

Aravind Adiga's presents Balram personality as unstable, convoluted, and complex. He is obedient to

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his masters, rebel to his family, philosopher to his fellow servants, blackmailer to the Muslim driver, a conspirator against his employer, and murderer of Ashok, the man who is his well-wisher and has immense faith in him. Characteristically speaking, he is both a positive and negative lead player in this tale, .e.g. hero - antihero, protagonist - adversary, and defiant - docile. He initially tried to rise and shine in life, so he learns car driving, against all odds, as only the martial castes learn this trade, but he, as a Halwai, survives and succeeds. The proximity of crooked mine owner (his masters), the great socialist a fraudulent politician and his goon Vijay, seeing their naked corruption with his own eyes, his intelligent intellect grasps it and seeds of moral and material venality grow in his veins. Afterward, it takes the shape of a huge tree. Adiga accords Balram intelligence with this following paragraph,

> "What is the rarest of animals-the creature that comes along only once in a generation?" I thought about it and said: "The white tiger." - Before he left, the inspector said, "I'll write to Patna asking them to send you a scholarship." (Ibid. 22)

Adiga made well-defined characters in this fiction. Some of these characters are round and others are flat; these characters are vital for making the narrative of the story. The round characters have traits, temperament, and personality, according to Carl Jung (7), there exist this major trait in Balram's character,

> "Neuroticism, who score high on this are more likely than average to be moody and to experience such feelings as anxiety, worry, fear, anger, frustration, envy, jealousy, guilt, depressed mood, and loneliness."

Adiga creates the character of Balram as neurotic; he decides to kill Ashok for the bag of money, that night he has a premonition that his entire clan (his grandmother, uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews and cousins) all of them expunges on behalf of the landowner retribution. Still, he executes his plans on the pretext that his father's wish was that one of his sons lives a life of respect.

> "My whole life, I have been treated like a donkey. All I want is that one son of mine-at least one-should live like a man." (Ibid.19)

The murder of Mr. Ashok solves two purposes for Balram, one he got a handsome amount as loot, hence, he invested this money very intelligently, he is a great eavesdropper, all his life he listens or observes this makes him shrewd and successful entrepreneur. The other purpose is to escape the Rooster coop; for many generations, Balram and his ancestor, are in the coop. Therefore, he has no remorse for the criminal felony he committed with the pitiless murder of Ashok, even at the cost of ruthless reprisal of landowners. Nevertheless, he proves wrong; he was still caged, he deprives of sleep, perspires in cold winter nights and he operates a ceiling fan to rid of the exudate and gains some sleep.

> "I'm still sweating, sir-and let me sit down on the floor, and watch the fan chop up the light of the chandelier." (Ibid.116)

The other interesting character is Pinky; she is not a female lead but lies on the fringe of the story. She is a cosmopolitan girl now traps amongst the feudalists; she cages herself in the love of Ashok and marries him, despite occasional domestic violence against her. She is not the part of a feudal family; still, she adapts and adopts it. She is a morally upright person with western values, the moment her in-laws conspire to frame their innocent driver in the accident that she commits. She plans her escape, quits, and flies to her parents.

The stork and his other brothers are co-landowners of Laxmangarh; they are fearful of village folks, whom they violently subjugate before them and snatch all their rights as human beings. These co-landowners are castes and class blind; they cannot think beyond this; they built these cages and buried their intellects in these living tombs.

The empathy of state administration towards downtrodden, backward, and poor is due to their acute selfish and greedy mindset; they caged the self in bank accounts and real estates. Adiga denotes the cage as actual and emblematical imprisonment of intellect, thoughts, and conviction of folk in the feudal society; besides it signifies psychosocial incarceration. The Stork's home in Dhanbad has iron bars on its windows like a coop, "a cage of iron grilles around each window." (Ibid.35) The other house with barred windows that represent a cage is the brothel. Balram often visits this cage.

> "The women-jeering and taunting from the grilled windows of the brothels, they're like parrots in a cage." (Ibid.149)

The tangible cage is in the mind of the half-baked men, the miserable folks of dark India; for them, these cages and the coops are inescapable and are factual as Sun in the sky.

II. Conclusion

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, (8) wrote in '*The Social Contract*'; "man is born free, but he is everywhere in chains," a fact during the colonial period. I take liberty in modifying the phrase according to the present times as "man is born free, but everywhere his mind is in chains." These cage minds gave birth to a herd mentality. That defines as conduct in which people act in unison or adopt similar behaviors as other people surrounds them, even at the cost of their feelings in this action. E.g., a sheep blindly track its flock unmindful of destination, just copying the herd. The majority of humankind accepted in-caged or in- cooped minds as their reality or destiny; they bound themselves in the collective fate and think alike, as Benjamin Franklin said, "*If everyone is thinking alike, then no one is thinking.*"

We all have been in situations where the crowd sweeps us along when we are knee-deep in religious

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dogmas, the reactionary cadre of any group, diehard nationalist, an intransigent fan of any public figure, then intellectualism and free thoughts die. A few burning examples of these vicious herds are religion, extremist fraternities, nationalism, majority-ism, communism, or fascism. In these groups free mind and individual thoughts are taboo, Friedrich Nietzsche (9) a German philosopher and thinker in *'Thus Spoke Zarathustra'* wrote, "In individual, insanity is rare; but in groups, parties, nations, and epochs, it is the rule." The cause of all wars, ethnic cleansings, and riots attributes to this herd mentality.

Long years ago, at the beginning of humanity, humankind was defenseless against wild animals, so they herd their selves together out of fear and so grows the habitats, villages, towns, cities, and megacities, civilization progresses on. The human evolves, but primitive fear exists, thus grow the modern herd syndrome. Fear is the mother of all military inventions. Men manufactured weapons of mass destruction for the annihilation of humanity, just out of fear of other adversaries. Many statesmen herd their countrymen to war. They create hysteria or lied to its people, hence, they are responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocents. The only panacea that exists to contain this herd syndrome is the rationalized thinking and fear-free mind of every individual. Wayne Walter Dyer (10), an American author in his book, '*The Power of Intention*' wrote,

> "When you follow the herd, you are bound to step in shit. Define your own life, follow your own path."

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