CHAPTER-V

The White Tiger: An Onslaught on Colonizing Feudalism

Although, the novel *The White Tiger* (2008) presents the perennial truth of the clash between all powerful society and rebellious individual, Aravind Adiga does not finish the things with tragic note of his individual protagonists’ surrender to age-old social and cultural forces. Social hierarchy and thus big dichotomy between rich and poor has been the hallmark of various Indian novels and the present one is no exception. What Adiga endeavours to explore in this novel is the politics of Indian society which is firmly moored and grounded in age-old class based feudal hierarchy. Besides, this post-modern novel chants the ways of liberation for dalits with the illustration of the protagonist who devises an escape from the perennial tyranny of the feudal society.

The Indian social scenario in the novel is described as divided into two classes viz. ruler and the ruled ones, symbolically represented by bellied and non-bellied respectively. The latter class has been subject to perennial discrimination and thus exploitation at the hands of stratum of feudal and colonizing class---may they be foreigner colonizers or Indians. The feudal social system, as Adiga hints, has the firm grip on the living culture and life in India and thus any heroic effort to challenge this culturally-backed conventional force is the most expectedly crushed into nothingness. But, materialistic ascendance of the protagonist Balram Halwai is suggestive of the long cherished success formula for exploited working class and as a deterrence against powerful feudal system. Balram’s success to rise as entrepreneur from age-old fated miseries through foul means amply brings forth the politics of the novel as being an onslaught on the age-old feudal system. Before venturing into the critical investigating the very fact of this novel’s being an deterrence to neo-feudal system it is imperative to have an analytical plunge into the meaning and very concept of the term- *feudalism*.

Mere lexical meaning of the term ‘feudalism’ restricts it to the practice of typical of Middle Ages when noblemen exercised their powers and influence on the ordinary masses by putting them into work in the fields and farms, assuring them protection in lieu of labour. Here, in this research, the term ‘feudalism’ is to be kept concerned with social aspects and forms of life in India. The term is to be analyzed in
its connotative meaning too, apart from denotative one. Though, there have been few scholarly and analytical attempts in the business of defining this term called-‘feudalism’, many renowned thinkers do not seems to share a single ideological platform on this term, giving different shades in the meaning of it in different economic and social contexts.

Apart from Elizabeth A. R. Brown, Marc Bloch et al it was Adam Smith who for the first time effectively used the term *feudalism* in his most celebrated book *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). Denotatively speaking, the term ‘feudal’ has its origin in Latin word- *feodum* or *feudum* which means *fief* which further refers to the non-monitory system, somewhat like barter wherein there is a rented land for which payment is work or labour in that land. Furthering the term in denotative ways with connotative shades, this system of feudalism, in wider terms, refers to a social system based on personal ownership of resources and personal fealty between suzerain and vassal(s). This definition further reveals at least three terms related to feudalism which are--fealty, suzerain and vassal. ‘Fealty’ denotes a promise and loyalty of the worker or a peasant of labouring into the fields or empires of others for earning the maintenance. This inevitably leads to the practice of slavery which is perpetual in many societies, particularly in third world countries. The poor peasant is treated as a pawn in the hands of the powerful landlord who treats him and his family as slaves. The human being, who is expected to be loyal to his master, is treated mere a chattel and the unending phenomenon of exploitation goes on.

The term *suzerain* refers to a dominant land owner whom poor labourers or peasants are forced to pledge allegiance or what they call fealty i.e loyalty. In India the suzerain is better known as *zamindaar* who earns abundance through this allegiance of the working class. *Vassal* in this etymological definition refers to the working class i.e. the peasants and labourers or what we call ‘proletarians.’ These peasants used to be known as *vassal* or as *grantee* of their loyalty to the suzerain. Although feudal system had functional characteristics of legal and military enforcement in Europe, yet the main foundation and the need of this practice were economic.

This system, as the analysis goes, was taken into practice and then developed into different forms but with the same mottoes in various cultures, with the sole
purpose of strengthening the economy of the state, or more truly of suzerain. Yet, if taken this concept in broader views, this practice of feudalism has come down to be taken as the main component of the structures of societies and culture in India. Gradually this system of working class’ loyalty to the powerful owner(s) has taken the form of way of life in many societies including India. When talking of Indian feudalism, it cannot be said exactly that when this practice came into being, yet the analysis of Romila Thapar in *A History of India* hints that the conditions of feudal system were very much present even before Sultanate India:

The basic requisite of a feudal system were present in India. The king granted the revenues from varying proportions of the land to his officers or selected holders, who were the equivalent of vassals elsewhere. The tendency from the seventh century onwards of granting land in lieu of cash salaries intensified the feudal process. The work of cultivation was carried out by peasants, generally, shudras, who in effect were almost tied to the land and who handed over a fixed share of produce to the landowner. (Thapar 242)

The Indian feudal practice was based on hierarchy with the king placed on the top, to be followed by the land-holders. Shudras, the lowest in the hierarchy were the labourers in the fields. It would not be exaggeration if the history of India is taken as the history of feudal system and caste system, the twin systems which have ensured the suffering and exploitation for lower strata such as Shudras or dalits and comforts for the privileged class. Such privileged classes have been in high positions to own the land on the basis of certain prerogatives, could give their land on lease and earn good profit. Regarding the distribution of benefits Thapar further holds:

The feudatories could hire out their assigned land to cultivators, from whom they collected the revenue agreed upon. Part of the revenue from land they sent to the king. Out of the revenue retained by the vassal he was expected to maintain the feudal levies which, underlying his oath of loyalty to his king, he was in duty bound to furnish for the king’s service. To break his oath was regarded as a heinous offence. He might also be called upon to his daughter in marriage to the king; he used the currency of his feudal lord, whose name he
dutifully mentioned in such monuments, inscriptions, and the like, which he caused to be made. (242)

In Indian context feudalism implies the very structure of the society as the feudalistic ways of life permeate the very soul of Indian culture. More significantly, this practice of hierarchical discrimination very appropriately has got colourings of already prevailing strong caste system. Economically and socially powerful high class family would rule the other families, clans, castes and ghettoes in Indian rural settings. Those who have hailed from so-called high stratum and caste are set to play as noblemen to make rest of the people from other strata work in their fields. This system implies deep rooted conventional exploitation of poor at the hands of the powerful feudals.

In India too, as in Europe, the basic factor behind the prevalence of this practice of feudal system was economic which gradually came to sway as social code. Hence, Indian feudalism characteristically evolved in conformity with strong class system based on the hierarchy of professions. Ancient political and religious treatise, Manusmriti by political thinker Manu is considered to be the basis of the Indian class-graded system since ancient Vedic times. Great modern reformist and thinker Dr. B R Ambedkar has quite impeccably brought forth the very stricture of this widely acclaimed treatise of graded-class system in his essay “Untouchability and the Caste System” by finding strong analogy between caste system and feudal system. The class hierarchy, which was introduced by the Indian political god Manu for stability in society, gradually evolved into caste system and thus feudalism came to dominate the society. Dr. Ambedkar has analyzed this doctrine critically in this essay:

In a social system based on graded inequality the possibility of a general common attack by aggrieved parties are not on common level. This can happen only when they are only high and low. In the system of graded inequality, there are the highest (Brahmins). Below the highest are the higher (the Kshatriyas). Below the higher are those who are high (Vaishya). Below the high are low (Shudra) and below the low are those who are lower (the Untouchables). All have the grievance against the highest and would like to bring about their downfall. But they will not combine. The higher is anxious to
get rid of highest but does not wish to combine with the high, the low and the lower lest they should rise to his status and become his equal. (Ambedkar 40)

With the passage of time this hierarchical system gradually aggravated the Indian social scene; it became the common practice to keep those born in lower strata suppressed in miserable conditions. The graded system was so craftily designed that the components of it should have some inherent interests to maintain it. This idea is illustrated by this great social reformist viz. Dr. Ambedkar. Brahmin, the top most in hierarchy, for example, does not fear lose his supremacy over others as the Kshatariya, the next in hierarchy, also enjoys supremacy over others viz. Vaishya, Shudra etc. Shudras, the lowest in rank found untouchables below them who were squarely unequipped and deprived for any right for them. The life has been abject for them for centuries, yet the cycle of caste system goes on unchecked and unaffected, untouched by the upheavals in human history.

Adiga in the present novel satirically describes this ancient Indian segregationist system in the form of systematic zoo wherein all the animals were kept systematically in the cages in accordance with their respective status and professions:

See, this country (India), in its days of greatness, when it was the richest nation on earth, was like a zoo. A clean, well-kept, orderly zoo. Everyone in his place, everyone happy. Goldsmiths here. Cowherds here. Landlords here. The man called a Halwai made sweets. The man called a cowherd tended cows. The untouchables cleaned faeces. Landlords were kind to their serfs. Women covered their heads with a veil and turned their eyes to the ground when talking to strange men. (The White Tiger 63)

Since religion has been the greatest and unchallenged force in many societies including Indian; this has been the chief nourishing factor in the development and flourishing of the twin systems viz. caste and feudal system, ever keeping the firm grip on the mentality of god-fearing and religious orthodox Hindu society. Had these twin practices been restricted to the fact of strengthening the economy of the state only there would have ensued radical transitions in cultural and social life in India; feudal system might have been reduced to nothingness by the mutinous efforts of
working lower classes. But sanctimonious connections of feudal-cum-caste system to all powerful religion ever protected this set up and it kept prevailing forever. Dr. Ambedkar further ponders over this conformity of religion, caste system, feudalism and even untouchability: “What is the nature of sanction behind the caste system? Unfortunately, the sanction behind the caste system is the religious sanction. I say unfortunately because anything which has a religious sanction becomes by virtue of it sacred and eternal”. (Ambedkar 41)

Although in modern democratic India, anyone can choose a profession irrespective to the class he has been born in, yet the caste archetypes are still strongly implanted in the long-colonized minds. Balram Halwai finds it very difficult to come out of the perennial lurch of remaining as a human spider at any dusty roadside tea shop as his brother Kishan is:

The old driver asked, ‘What caste are you?’

‘Halwai.’

‘Sweet-makers,’ the old driver said, shaking his head. ‘That’s what you people do. You make sweets. How can you learn to drive?’ He pointed his hookah at the live coals. ‘That's like getting coals to make ice for you. Mastering a car,-- he moved the stick of an invisible gearbox--’it’s like taming a wild Stallion—only a boy from the warrior castes can manage that. You need to have aggression in your blood. Muslims, Rajputs, Sikhs—they are the fighters, they can become drivers. You think sweet-makers can last long in fourth gear?’

(WT 56)

In fact, this novel is an attempt to establish anti-conventional and anti-archetypal approach in tune with present day globalized world when anyone can uplift himself from the chasm of traditional caste based professional bounds; as a boy from Halwai caste succeeds as a skillful driver, a contriver, a murderer and finally an entrepreneur. However, this is quite unfortunate in case of ethnic Indian society that the minds of millions are conditioned to age-old archetypes, prejudices, stereo-types owing to the long history of hierarchy in class system, segregation, feudalism colonialism etc. Strongly clinging to the caste-based-profession the traditional doctrine of Manu in general would never entertain the people from lower class for higher jobs and
positions in village panchayats and other activities. This practice of discrimination has been very long as described by Ram Ahuja in his book *Indian Social System*:

The social relations among castes depends upon the ranking of the castes in the caste hierarchy. When villagers meet either for council meetings or for gossips, they generally seat themselves with considerations to caste rank. Some sit on the cot and some on the ground. The members of the higher rank castes (Brahmins, Rajputs) sit on the upper part of the cot where one puts the pillow for sleeping while those of the next higher ranks sit at the foot of the cot. The members of the intermediate castes sit on the ground near the cot whereas the members of low caste sit on the ground far away from the cot. When only men from middle and low castes are present, the middle caste members may sit on the cot but those of the low caste sit on the ground. (Ahuja 308-09)

Such seating arrangement described above symbolically tells of the position of the people sitting for thousands of year; the lower caste people have been subjected to inhuman treatment and continuous humiliation. This hierarchy based arrangement of the caste-politics has not been tried for any manipulation or stir from within and the circle of discrimination, exploitation in feudal style has been going on unchecked. Adiga delineates this grim reality of unchecked slavery, such positions and statuses in symbolic manner through novel concept of Rooster Coop. The millions of proletarians have been so groomed and conditioned that they take it their fate to remains like helpless chicks within the Coop, never daring to revolt and escape as the system is so carved that they hardly find any bolt-hole. A handful colonizer exploiters keep the rest of the people in Rooster Coop, ‘to exist in perpetual servitude’. (WT 176)

Regarding the concept of Rooster Coop, which has been detaining the poor people for centuries, the novelist does not put blame on the exploiters or the ruler ones for this in summary. Actually, a half-baked average Indian always is made to nurse the firm conviction of never thinking of crossing the peripheries of conventions set by the social forces. The Rooster Coop, within which these people are conditioned to live and die, is actually protected from inside as the fellow beings from the poor
community put every possible spoke into the wheel of anyone who tries to escape and excel in life. Adiga very clearly describes the practices making the Rooster Coop work properly and let the ceaseless cycle of hierarchical colonizing system go on, “No. it’s because 99.9 per cent of us are caught in the Rooster Coop just like those poor guys in the poultry market”. (175). That is why, Adiga puts forward the significance of the existence of white tiger, the majestic animal with defiance to the jungle rules. Balram is a possible prototype of those who can defy the age-old strong restraints and break out of the Rooster Coop. In an interview, Adiga himself makes clear the significance and need of white tiger in the person of Balram, “Balram is a man trying to understand that this is a trap and how he is going to break out of the trap.” (Adiga Qtd. in Choubey 60)

The satirical description of the ironic stance of Indian proletarian honesty is the base of the success story of the smooth functioning of such social mechanism which keep the low caste, exploited working people well within the clutches of few native colonizers. This enforced honesty keeps the poor working class intact in the same contour of servitude in which they have been for centuries:

Because Indians are the world’s most honest people, like the prime minister’s booklet will inform you? No. it’s because 99.9 per cent of us are caught in the Rooster Coop just like those poor guys in the poultry market. The Rooster Coop doesn’t always work with minuscule sums of money. Don’t test your chauffeur with a rupee coin or two—he may well steal that much. But leave a million dollar in front of a servant and he won’t touch a penny. Try it: leave a black bag with a million dollars in a Mumbai taxi. The taxi driver will call the police and return the money by day’s end. I guarantee it. (Whether the police will give it to you or not is another story, sir!) Masters trust their servants with diamonds in this country! It’s true. Every evening on the train out of Surat, where they run the world’s biggest diamond-cutting and polishing business, the servants of diamond merchants are carryings suitcases full of cut diamonds that they have to give to someone in Mumbai. Why that servant doesn’t take the suitcase full of diamonds? He is no Gandhi, he’s a human, he’s you and me. But he is in Rooster Coop..(WT 174-75)
Such ironic instance of rarest honesty under the sun reveals the fact of deep rooted fear and perpetual colonial mindset of the millions of Indians. The phenomenal truth of the Indian honesty and the impact of Rooster Coop on the large number of working class people serve as the basis for the social and economic cycle. The gigantic Indian economy runs through the active participation of those who work within the Coop. A rickshaw puller, who is in dire need of money for betterment of his family, very honestly and unmistakably takes the bag full of currency notes to its right destination. This amount is sufficient to feed him and his descendents. Though the financial availability can lift a poor man from the abysmal condition, he never puts a breach to the unwritten rules of the society that has assigned his role inside the Coop, in the shackles.

In fifth letter to the Chinese Premiere Mr. Jiabao, the novelist intentionally spills the beans about this perennial servitude of Indians---, “A handful of men in this country have trained the remaining 99.9 per cent- as strong, as talented, as intelligent in every way—to exist in perpetual servitude; a servitude so strong that you can put the key of his emancipation in a man’s hands…” (176) The smooth functioning and success of world’s biggest diamond market in Surat hinge upon the workings of those who work according to and within the rods of this Coop. This superstructure of Indian society and economy have not a few strong and robust anchors to support in, rather it is shining and bulging on millions of sun-burnt, dark but very thin legs of proletarians. These thin and slender legs of millions of rickshaw-pullers, household aides, chauffeurs, factory labour, road labour etc. have been bearing the burden of flourishing Indian rich and middle class.

During the formative days for Indian independence the social reformists such as Dr. B R Ambedkar and other visionaries found it rather imperative to put legal check on the practice of feudalism, social discrimination and other canker like practices for implementing egalitarian democratic set-up through Indian Constitution. Yet, this was the big question that how age-old social practices can be curtailed through imposition of certain laws. In fact, these cankers had been lurking deeper and deeper into the large edifice called Indian society; and the introduction of democracy after the departure of British just worked to conceal these cankers from the sight while it has been spreading further. The sudden freedom and gift of Swaraj or democracy is
very hard stuff to come down the throat of Indians who have long history of colonial and feudal rule and they have, as the consequence, gradually become adept to be ruled. The democracy in this country of long colonial era was set to be nothing but a cruel joke in the socio-political history of the world.

Ironically, general masses have been so groomed and conditioned in colonized settings for years that there evolved incompatibility of them with democratic atmosphere of living. Iconic renowned thinker Noam Chomsky’s words, though in the context of American and Latinate world, hold the truth of bogus democracy in post-modern world, “On the right, the perception is that democracy is threatened by the organizing efforts of those called the “special interests,” a concept of contemporary political rhetoric that refers to workers, farmers, women, youth, the elderly, the handicapped, ethnic minorities, and so on—in short, the general population.” (Chomsky, 2007: 03) This perception though held by the elitist groups as expressed in Chomsky’s *The Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*—relates to the role of individual selfish ends in the general politics of democracy. The concept of democracy implies the vesting of rights among the general public but along with certain duties. Very nature and credentials of democracy are gradually disfigured if mere rights are asserted at the cost of national and humanitarian interests.

On the fourth morning Balram, the smart mouthpiece of Adiga, writes to the Chinese Premier about Indian democracy in ironical tone and thus satirizes, “Some politician on the radio was saying that that’s why we Indians are going to beat you: we may not have sewage, drinking water, and Olympic gold medals, but we do have democracy.”(WT, 96) There remains unresolved paradox in the scheme of Indian social construct that the country remains bereft of basic amenities for the general masses, yet there is democracy, the power and hold of people themselves. Potent tool of democracy provides a layman to have say in the scheme of the system, the government, structure, development and ensures one’s role in democratic system. The mode of making this contribution in democratic system is election. It is through general elections that an ordinary person can assert his importance in the system, but on this occasion mere helplessness of layman is exposed as ironically portrayed in the novel, “Like eunuchs discussing Kama Sutra, the voters discuss the elections in Laxmangarh.”(98)
In a society wherein there has been long dark history of feudalism and colonialism with deep rooted caste sense, the true practice of democracy can never thrive. It requires constant de-conditioning of minds and thus reconstruction of the society, enabling people escape from such dehumanizing practice. Election, the greatest festival in this country of many festivals, is a great joke and slap on the face of common man. In the process of elections representation are dominated by white-clad new feudals like Great Socialist. The writer gives satirical account of election in India:

Now the date for the elections had been set, and declared on radio, election fever had started spreading again. These are the three main diseases of this country, sir: typhoid, cholera, and election fever. This last one is the worst; it makes people talk and talk about the things that they have no say in. (98)

Ideally speaking, electoral rights in one’s hand can be used as weapon to fight the corruption and practice of exploitation, yet in a society whose moorings are strongly held with unending feudal system, men, the so-called voters, are confiscated from franchise; elections are won by formidable feudal powers. In such gloomy society an individual is given rights to vote only on papers, but actually a large number of underprivileged people, who are more concerned to somehow live from hand to mouth, cannot afford registering their legal age in the offices. In this jungle anybody can be marked as having attained the legal age of eighteen so that their vote can be misused by those who hold the reigns of their lives. The protagonist is one of those unfortunates who is named by his corrupt school teacher and given the age of eighteen on papers to use him as a vote for the neo-colonizer politicians. The time Balram is given his name in the classroom, determining his legal voting age and, of course, his first birthday, he is observed in ironical stance. Millions of minor are given the legal age of voting but they never get opportunity to peep inside polling booth; their votes are manipulated to secure the seats in parliament and assemblies, the citadel of clever thugs:

I had to be eighteen. All of us in the tea shop had to be eighteen, the legal age to vote. There was an election coming up, and the tea shop owner had already sold us. He had sold our fingerprints—the inky fingerprints which the illiterate
person makes on the ballot paper to indicate his vote. I had overheard this from a customer. This was supposed to be a close election; he had got a good price for each one of us from the Great Socialist’s party. (97)

Ironically, this so-called democracy has aggravated the situation in this country of social hierarchy as the politicians, like the Great Socialist in Bihar, easily get licence to exploit the poor in the name of democracy. Democratic system is expected to protect the rights of the common people and help them grow in life, yet the opportunists, like Stork and the Great Socialist in Laxmangarh, have make the situation grimmer in democratic India. The scholarly analyses of the term of democracy by the great thinkers all find it an effective tool to achieve equality and rights for the people. Robert A Dahl’s definition of democracy summarizes many such aspects, “Democracy provides opportunities for 1) effective participation, 2) equality in voting, 3) gaining enlightened understanding, 4) exercising final control [by the people] over the agenda, and 5) inclusion of adults.” (Dahl 38) The functions of democracy as a political machinery should ensure the participation of the people, to have proper say in the power politics. Dahl further ponders over, “The political institutions that are necessary to pursue these goals are 1) election officials, 2) free, fair and frequent elections, 3) freedom of expressions, 4) alternative sources of information, 5) associational autonomy, and 6) inclusive citizenship.” (85)

Notwithstanding these ideal aspects of democracy, Indian democracy is the ugliest facet of any system as people are kept at bay perpetually by the controlling forces. The true picture delineated in the novel is the total nullification of the very idea of democracy in this country of dark practices. In fact, this very democracy has become a tool not of people’s rights but for those feudal forces who hijack the whole system. To keep the perpetuity of slavery, servitude, practice of sophisticated feudalism, etc. alive amongst the general masses the modern politicians take resort to democracy, ensuring the ruling and exploiting the country through the sophisticated machinery which can be termed neo-colonialism or neo-feudalism. Election is thus, the greatest festival and a significant carnival but for those who hijack it.

The common man, who is otherwise relegated and marginalized on social and political scene, is found scurrying around the corrupt politicians, the misuse of his vote and his nullified role notwithstanding. It is on the basis of this festival that the
white-clad powerful gods of corruption go on winning the elections and the heaven-like golden thrones to rule the hell. Although the concept and practice of democracy imply the potent and active role of the common masses to elect their representatives and thus to enjoy indirect power to run the country, yet they are cut down to marginal size by few neo-feudals who hijack the entire power and system. Therefore, the Indian democracy is the novel form of monarchy and feudal system to let the circle of exploitation and meek stoicism go on perpetually.

However, Adiga does perceive change in twentieth first century India with many castes primarily reduced to only two binaries i.e. rich and poor, exploiter and exploited or symbolically described bellied and non-bellied. The symbolic representation of postmodern feudal rich and the proletarian class in the form of bellied and non-bellied respectively makes clear the prevalent social reality in India; the jungle where the shape and size of one’s body determine his position in the society, where there thrives the practice of *might is right*. In fact, the dalits, the depressed and tyrannized classes, were never let grow their bellies with sufficient nourishment and as a consequence they could not develop the gluttony for riches as the powerful feudal class did. That is why the bellied has been eating while the poor working class non-bellied people get eaten up by them. Such class division on the basis of strong class system and the size and shape of belly have been the criteria for determining one’s status in the society; this fact also finds echo in the writings of V. S. Naipaul’s as he describes in his controversial but celebrated travelogue *An Area of Darkness: His Discovery of India*:

Class is a system of rewards. Caste imprisons a man in his function. From this it follows, since there are no rewards, that duties and responsibilities become irrelevant to position. A man is his proclaimed function. There is little subtlety to India. The poor are thin; the rich are fat. The petty Marwari merchant in Calcutta eats quantities of sweets to develop the layers of fat that will proclaim his prosperity. ‘You look fat and fresh today’ is a compliment in Punjab. And in every Uttar Pradesh town you might see the rich and very fat man in cool, clean white sitting in cycle-rickshaw being pedalled by a poor and very thin man, prematurely aged, in rags… *(An Area of Darkness 76)*
While delineating the extremes of rich and poor in the form of fat and bellied animals and thin poor ones in Indian jungle, Adiga takes his literary aesthetics to the heights. This jungle where mighty is set to hunt, exploit and kill the weaker, gives the impression of Indian Animal Farm House. This Orwellian farm house can thrive only with hierarchical set-up wherein the animals with bigger size and status like Buffalo, Stork, Raven, and Wild Boar etc. enjoy the prerogative of exploiting the weaker animals and birds who serve them. The proletarian poor class has been conditioned and trained to act like inferior species and serve the fistful masters, may they be foreigners or locals. The novelist critically gives the ironical account of India’s history that how this systematic zoo-like society has been turned into the lawless jungle and finally how democracy is not suitable to those who can survive only through servitude. The binary of two classes, with exploiters and exploited at two ends, has been the key to maintain the class and social system like zoo wherein the animals are placed systematically according to their position and status.

However, it was ironical chapter in the bleak history of India when a great mischief was made in 1947—the long captivated, colonized strata of millions were let open to legally provide them freedom through democracy:

And then, 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 the jungle law replaced the 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. (WT, 63-64)

Here, in this post 1947 jungle, the egalitarian concept of democracy would never come into practice as the social and cultural norms and rules of ruling and being ruled are so deeply induced in the minds of the people that the poor takes it as his fate to be at service of the rich and lead a miserable life; the power of public representation is still dominated by ever ruling feudal class. This jungle consists of certain species of beasts, animals and birds of motley types and the roles have been assigned to them as per their status and strength in hierarchy. Hegemony in this wilderness, as the novelist portrays, is enjoyed by mainly four domineering, carnivorous, predators, feudal
landlords viz. Buffalo, Wild Boar, Raven and Stork. The first of these four dreadful blood sucking animals in the form of feudal landlord at Laxmangarh has been delineated as Stork having parasitical propensities, yet adept to kill and stride the world around. This man, the prototype of typical feudalism, represents the avarice, debauchery, arrogance, insensitiveness and other vicious attributes which pop up his image of being *red in tooth and claw*:

The Stork was a fat man with a fat moustache, thick and curved and pointy at the tips. He owned the river that flows outside the village, and he took a cut of every catch of fish caught by every fisherman in the river, and a toll from every boatman who crossed the river to come to our village. (24-25)

In accordance with his species’ functional tactics Stork is indulged in feeding himself through the watery ways since the boatmen and the fishermen are assigned to nourish him at the cost of their livelihood. Balram is the chauffeur to this man who uses the former in multiple tasks such as cooking, sweeping, washing and messaging his dirty feet and other odd jobs. The men having the special capacity of gluttony, who can eat up in abundance of riches and who can exploit the poor, are represented by Buffalo:

The man with the notebook was not the Buffalo; he was assistant. There was another fellow inside the ambassador; a stout one with a bald, brown, dimpled head, a serene expression on his face, and a shotgun on his lap. He was Buffalo. The Buffalo was one of the landlords in Laxmangarh. There were three others, and each had got his name from the peculiarities of appetite that had been detected in him. (24)

This description of Buffalo as the rich tyrannical landlord indicates to the conventional unending practice of exploitation of poor at the hands of such blood suckers who epitomize the stark colonial practices which have been keeping the poor as slaves. Regarding their avarice and looting propensities Adiga further describes, “The Buffalo was greediest of the lot. He had eaten up the rickshaws and the roads. So if you ran a rickshaw, or used the roads, you have to pay him his feed---one third of whatever you earned no less” (25) Millions of rickshaw pullers, peasants, labourers etc. have to earn their livelihood with sweat of their brow but they are bound to spare
a good deal of their hard earned money to these fat buffalos. The symbolic naming by Adiga of these colonizers of jungle world is pretty appropriate in the novel as Wild Boar is a dangerous beast without castration but with unending gluttony, ever moving freely on hunt for the prey he likes to pick. Following this wild law of *might is right* the powerful keeps the weaker in miserable condition and lets the other powerful fellow animals thrive:

His (Buffalo’s) brother was called Wild Boar. This fellow owned all agriculture land round Laxmangarh. If you wanted to work on those lands, you have to bow down to his feet, and touch the dust under his slippers, and agree to swallow his day wages. When he passed by women, his car would stop; the windows would roll down to reveal his grin, and curved like little tusks. (25)

Poor wagers are so groomed socially to servitude and to exploitation at the hands of these landlords that they take it as their fate to serve them for generations. Dalit women from labour class can never think of any form of retaliation or resistance against the lustful advancements of such domineering animals, the landlords. The condition of lower-class Dalit women have been disgraced since ancient Vedic era; Sumanta Banerjee alludes from Mahabharata such grim reality of dalit women:

People say
as a girl you used to row a boat in the river.
Seeing your beauty, tempted by your lotus-bud,
the great Parashar stung you, and
there was a hue and cry:
You’ve done it once,
You don’t have anything to fear.
Now you can do as much as you want to,
no one will say anything.
If it has to be done,
Why don’t you do it, mother? (Banerjee Qtd. in Omvedt 32)

This is shocking and unfortunate that poor working class dalit women are kept so groomed with the practice of their disgrace at the hands of upper-class powerful
people that they take it their fate from Providence. The scriptures, myths, legends which are taken as sacred preach such politicized fate of lower-class women; and that is why still the landlords such as Wild Boar and other have easy excess on them. Another species in the pedigree of tyrannical lineage is Raven, the ugly bird with rough unpleasant cry, exploits the goatherds and heavily keeps polishing the piles of black money like his feathers by picking with his beak the great deal of hard-earned wages of the goatherds. The slaves in India can never dream of human dignity as they are always forced at the service of such powerful tyrants. The Raven can sexually exploit the poor people if the latter cannot pay the commission, “If they didn't have their money, he liked to dip his beak into their backsides, so they called him the Raven.” (WT 25) The social rule thrives simply if the weaker section is unable to feed the Ravens the latter will exploit them sexually too.

The practice of novel type of feudalism in democratic India is not only restricted to rural India, what the novelist portrays as dark India, but it has stretched to urban jungle too, though with different colourings and shades. In modern urban India the rich ruling class enjoys the constant services of half-baked human spiders who serve as chauffeurs, rickshaw-pullers, cooks, sweepers and other domestic aides. In Gurgaon posh colony Ashok’s royal pomp is maintained through constant servitude of Balram who drives, cooks, massages, nurses this feudal landlord family. The culmination of exploitation of the poor and the ever prevailing sense of servitude are dexterously delineated by the novelist when in urban democratic settings of NCR, Pinky, the ultramodern wife of Ashok, runs over an urchin while driving in inebriated condition, but Balram is expected to happily prove his loyalty by taking blame on him:

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

I, Balram Halwai, son of Vikram Halwai, of Laxmangarh village in the district of Gaya, do make the following statement of my own free will and intentions: That I drove the car that hit an unidentified person, or persons, or person and objects, on the night of January 23rd this year. That I then panicked and refused to fulfil my obligations to the injured party or parties by taking them to the nearest hospital emergency ward. That there were no other occupants of
the car at the time of the accident. That I was alone in the car, and alone responsible for all that happened.
I swear by almighty God that I make this statement under no duress and under instruction from no one.
Signature or thumb print:
(Balram Halwai) (167)

This affidavit clearly reveals the sorry condition of poor people in India and the utter futility of democracy. Feudal mentality and practice, the helpless poor sacrificing their lives for the betterment of the landlords, thrives unchecked. The peril of the shift of blame to poor Balram is somehow evaded by black-clad clever agents i.e. the lawyer of feudal rich family. But it should be noted that there ensues no possibility of pursuing the case for the killed one. Typical feudalized enslaved Kussum, Balram’s granny, very heartily welcomes this incident with excitement as if she assumes herself the mother of a martyr; the patriot granny who has offered her child for a crusade i.e. to serve the masters best. Along with her the other family members also take pride in the fact that their boy has been chosen by the fate to be useful for their masters; the feudal mentality is so profound of the working class that they find no time and need to develop the sense for the value of freedom in their lives. Rather, they are adept to stoically remain dependent on the mercy of the rich landlords; they have degenerated into the robotic slaves, caught in the tune of their masters’ panegyrics, sycophancy and utter slavery even in twenty first century.

To find a job out of his caste-based assigned profession one has to resort to total slavery to these feudalist landlords.- “Of course, sir- people say, ‘Our father is gone, Thakur Ramdev is gone, the best of the landlords is gone, who will protect us now?’” (61). This is the height of servitude, dependency and helplessness of the proletarians that they need some cunning landlord to protect them. As said above in the case of strong caste system and anything with religious moorings stand ever unchallenged; in context of feudalistic mentality there goes certain sanctimonious connections too. Deep rooted dogmatic religious archetypes have great role to permanently implant constant fear in the unthinking heads; Brahmanical feudalism and then of hierarchical one have emerged as the authorities and institutions of so-called purgation for the people over the years.
Critical analysis of the anatomy and the politics of specific religiosity among the fear-ridden masses brings out the truth that feudalized mentality is based on fear, for which one cannot easily develop any deterrence. Out of as many as three crore plus four gods as Adiga satirizes in the novel, “Making a grand total of 36,000,004 divine arses for me to choose from” (08) , one tends to choose one who is the most formidable god that suits their mentality of servitude. Hanuman, as the Adiga satirically marks, is the most formidable god worshipped widely in darkness. Besides, this monkey god most fittingly signifies loyalty to the masters as exemplified through his undiminished services to Raja Ram who was born in high caste. Hanuman is, thus, the most favoured god in darkness; this liking is based on two facts one is fear another is loyalty:

Inside, you will find an image of a saffron-colored creature, half man half monkey: this is Hanuman, everyone's favorite god in the Darkness. Do you know about Hanuman, sir? He was the faithful servant of the god Rama, and we worship him in our temples because he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and devotion. These are the kinds of gods they have foisted on us, Mr. Jiabao. Understand, now, how hard it is for a man to win his freedom in India” . (19)

In a country having social history of five thousand years, sense of servitude and thus of fear have been induced in the minds through paradigmatic religious conditioning. Fear is the dominant emotions in the people who have been under the constant sway of darkness. They are doomed with the culture wherein they can expect some safety from tyrant themselves or from the their prototyped gods. People in general have hardly been exposed to proper education through which they could evolve the sense of aesthetics which is the key to freedom from slavery. Utter ignorance mainly owes to the fact of their having been confined to the business for earning livelihood and somehow live up for bit possible betterment for their children. In other words, in a society wherein economically poor strata have to stay honest to the social code laid by the powerful class.

Education is the base of civilization and human development and thus it is a right for all. The novelist skillfully unravels the very sorry state of affairs in basic
education in dark India through the case of the protagonist in school, “There was supposed to be free food at my school—a government programme gave every boy three rotis, yellow dal, and pickles at lunchtime. But we never saw rotis, or yellow dal, or pickles, and everyone knew why: the schoolteacher had stolen our lunch money”. (33) It is interesting to note how the villagers justify this shameful act, “No one blamed the schoolteacher for doing this. You can’t expect a man in a dung heap to smell sweet”. (33). Every aspect of life is so engrossed in corrupt ways that no one is disturbed with such degeneration of the society, rather people justify such unscrupulous ways of life. Similar dystopian picture of Indian corrupt system is drawn by V. S. Naipaul, whose influence on Adiga seems to be in at some degree, in An Area of Darkness:

Symbolic action: tree-planting week (seventy per cent of the tree planted die from lack of attention after the speeches), smallpox eradication week (one central minister is reported to have refused to be vaccinated for religious reasons, and vaccination certificates can be bought for a few shillings from various medical men), anti-fly week (declared in one state before the flies came), children’s day (a correct speech by Mr. Nehru about children on the front page of the newspaper and on the back page a report that free milk intended for poor children had found its way to the Calcutta open market), malaria eradication week (HELP ERADICATE MALARIA daubed in English, on the walls of illiterate Hindi-speaking villages). (An Area of Darkness 80)

In his analysis in this book Naipaul finds Indian social workings hinging upon the corrupt base wherein hypocrisy sways high in all walks of life. Trees grow only in government records, many die of malaria but they claim having observed healthy weeks, children stay confiscated and deprived of natural rights of nutrition but corrupt system ensures their share of food to be sold in black market. The string of irony keeps running on the odd pages of The White Tiger, for example, when good education inspector discerns special propensities of the white tiger viz. Balram and makes him read out the words which hold irony to reality in darkness, “We live in a glorious land. The Lord Buddha received his enlightenment in this land. The river
Ganga gives life to our plants and our animals and our people. We are grateful to God that we were born in this land”. (WT, 34)

A society which is educationally flawed, there runs corruption even at elementary level, other aspects of such society cannot remain unaffected since education is the basic tool to fight the corruption and other evils. Health, after education, is the primary responsibility of the government but this area is more deteriorated in terms of providing medical facilities to the citizens. There runs deep rooted corruption in health department as the public money is siphoned and India’s progression in medical fields is boasted by the politician on papers as Balram warns the Chinese Premier Mr. Jianbao.

He states that on papers shown to foreign dignitaries and produced at international organization like WHO India is shown marching with good pace on the path leading to healthy world and thus grants and charities or billions are fetched in. Naked and grim reality of health system in India is exposed in very realistic manner when Vikram Halwai, a rickshaw puller and father of Balram, starts succumbing to long cherished tuberculosis; he is rushed to government hospital wherein any poor can get treatment free of cost:

Now, you—Dr. Ram Pandey—will kindly put one-third of your salary in my palm. Good boy. I return, I do this.’ He made a tick on the imaginary ledger. ‘You can keep the rest of your government salary and go work in some private hospital for the rest of the week. Forget the village. Because according to this ledger you’ve been there. you’ve treated my wounded leg. You have healed that girl’s jaundice.(50)

The government job, as in the case of schoolteacher and the doctors in the novel, is the choicest step to go ahead in the business of sucking blood of the nation and the society ruthlessly. Owing the feudal structured mind-set the exploited entity cannot gather spunk to oppose such malpractices. The cycle of disparity between haves and have-nots would go unchecked when the latter class, the dalits, have not faith in the appointed agency of law and order i. e. police; the feudalistic rich can manipulate the squarely corrupt police in the way they want to meet their selfish end. Adiga amply exposes the true facades of police which has slavish attitude to rich and bullying to the poor. The irony goes naked when the police officer in Bangalore becomes so
flashed with the shining and glowing power of currency notes that he cannot have even a single thought to identify Balram in the ‘wanted’ picture just behind him:

He counted the money—ten thousand rupees—heard what I wanted, and asked for double. I gave him a bit more, and he was happy. I tell you, Mr. Premier, my poster was right there, the one I had seen earlier, the whole time I was negotiating with him. The WANTED poster, with the dirty little photo of me. (300)

Public in general including police are too cynical about the domestic servant-cum-drivers to believe his rise to the status of entrepreneurship that they are supposed to be confined within the peripheries of Rooster Coop. The police officer is so engrossed with Balram’s influence as entrepreneur Ashok Sharma and with the money in bribe that he refuses to recognize him at all. Such cynicism and blind reaction to someone’s excellence or fortune is indicative of the fact of the prevalence of structured dogmas, archetypes, feudal approach as the main components in the construction of Indian social framework; hierarchical society always stands groomed to spurn and keep have-nots on the brink. In such social construction poor, orphan, exploited underdogs are never accepted owing to age-old cynicism. This has entailed ceaseless struggle and battle between such unacceptable individuals and cynical social forces which much often presents to tragic phenomena of individual succumbing to the ethnic powers.

What Adiga has opted for depiction and discussion is the darker side of India much against the fallible deceptive idea of India shining. The age-old darkness prevailing squarely in the wilderness is suggestive of the anarchy of jungle raj which has been devastating the people of their natural rights. In the interview just after having won Man Booker Prize, Arvind Adiga himself made this point, “The book’s (The White Tiger) originality lies in showing ‘the dark side of India’ my criteria were—‘does it knock my socks off? And this one did”. (Adiga Qtd. in Choubey, 57) The dark reality in this country is the contribution of those who have been exploiting the country in every way; the white clad politicians are ahead of all in this business. Adiga relates this reality in case of The Great Socialist in Bihar.

The Great Socialist here, being the target of the intended satire for deep rooted corruption, is the epitome of all the vested evils, representing the whole of this corrupt
creed, has been selling this country and sucking the blood of humanity. He has been winning the elections for decades by hook or by crook from Laxmangarh, exploiting the regions of its rich minerals and coal; and this time too he is the candidate when the narrator tells the gloomy election story of this country:

You see, a total of ninety-three criminal cases—for murder, rape, grand larceny, gun-smuggling, pimping, and many other such minor offence—are pending against the Great Socialist and his ministers at the present moment. Not easy to get convictions when the judges are judging in Darkness, yet three convictions have been delivered, and three of the ministers are in jail, but continue to be ministers. The Great Socialist himself is said to have embezzled one billion rupees from the Darkness, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money. (WT 97-98)

The debauched people with tainted character are suitable candidates for contesting the election, flexing of one’s muscles; ability to exploit, sycophancy and above all feudal influence are deemed to be fit and requisite qualification. It owes to the aesthetics of the writer that he deploys pungent paradox, peeling off the layers from masquerading politicians to reveal the reality of their siphoned black money which is deposited in Swiss Bank, the beautiful place of white people. Although, politically the post-1947 era is believed to be free from colonial Raj in India, there still prevails the sense of colonialism which is termed as neo-colonialism as the condition of the common man still remains grim and miserable. As colonialism has not come to an end and continues in the different forms, in the same way feudalism, though in changed form, still continues to dominate the Indian cultural minds. The present novel is thus a testament of this truth as it reveals the twentieth first century Indian feudal realities vividly.

Nevertheless, The White Tiger is not mere a representation of the dark India with continuous feudal practices, it is rather to be analyzed as an onslaught on that colonizing practice. The noun ‘onslaught’ denotes, as the lexical semantics goes,-- a strong or violent attack—this strong or violent attack may be on something, such as an institution, agency or organization etc. Connotatively it signifies a form of
deterrence or challenge or rebellion of underdogs against the establishments and authorities. Balram here has been given the charge of representing that challenge or spunk to escape from the shackles or Rooster Coop in twenty first democratic India.

Since social influence is inevitable on the creative writers, the impact of such feudal practices has been prominent in various forms in universal literature. May there be classical tragedies or saga of modern man’s predicament in modernist literature, there ensues a clash between an individual, who is supposedly larger than life, and powerful society. Artistic presentation of the individual, who is supposedly more sinned against than sinning and waging unending war against the social and cultural forces, has been the preoccupation of motley of writers of great repute. The tragedies of Thomas Hardy have established and universalized the idea of man’s woes and sufferings and his inevitable doom owing to his challenge to all powerful social codes. Tess in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1892) and Jude in *Jude the Obscure* (1895) were universally acclaimed protagonists to have challenged the conservative social system, but they ended up very miserably. Indian literature potently sings this tragic rant of man’s vulnerability and surrender to all pervasive social dogmas an traditions in rather colonial tone.

The protagonist of Anita Desai such as Hugo Baumgartner in *Baumgartner’s Bombay* (1988) or Maya in *Cry the Peacock* have been projected succumbing to the powerful social codes based on feudal social structures. Nonetheless, the new age writers typical of Postcolonial band have come forward to devise novel ways to come out of colonized sanctums with special focus on the abilities of have-nots and with rebellion and violation in narrative styles. In *The White Tiger* the perennial truth of the clash between all powerful society and rebellious individual has been brought into fore artistically. The saga of this unending war between individual and cynical social forces finds ample echo in the novel as well.

Nevertheless, Adiga in this novel radically diverts from colonial style of focusing the typical tragic flaws by putting forward the idea of nirvana for the protagonist as the deterrence to antagonistic society. He, envisaging future India, has not finished with tragic notes of his individual protagonist’s surrender to age-old feudalistic forces. The protagonist though belongs to the class of have-nots who are captive of the system of oppression which hardly let them find any opportunity to
escape, yet he represents those who are bestowed with spunk and courage to develop deterrence to this system. The fact of his rise in terms of material gains, which gives him economic freedom, makes one who has got a thinking upon his shoulders to take this novel as having Marxist leanings. Though, Adiga has purpose in this novel and that is the purpose of liberation for those who have been in shackles. The novel shows the path to liberation through aesthetics, believing in oneself and having ability to financially strengthen himself.

The very title of the novel is helpful in understanding the very politics of the novelist’s theory of resistance and deterrence for underdogs in Rooster Coop; the white tiger being different and exceptional species to set the example of liberation from the tyrannical clutches. In fact tiger is known for its unchallenged authority and majesty remaining aloof from other species with its own living arrangement. But amongst tigers white tiger is the rarest species with all the more majesty and freedom. In fact, a white tiger is not naturally born species with white fur and coat of skin but it is crossbred from two species. And in order to maintain white tigers in the zoos and parks they are put into the process of inbreeding of the same family. American Zoological Association scientists are of the opinion that such inbreeding or cross breeding in producing white tiger causes certain genetic abnormality and the result of which is that it is more wild, moody and rather asocial.

Adiga artistically brings out analogy between this special tiger and the protagonist as propensities in Balram Halwai perceptibly distinguish him from other Halwais, drivers, servants and entrepreneurs. According to the zoologists at AZA the white tigers are resultantly more lethal but debilitated too and this puts a questioning finger to Adiga’s metaphysics of this analogy as Balram is no way mentally or physically weak. However, scientific research on white tigers do pronounce their majesty, glory and special love for freedom, apart from their deadly powers to make their own ways. Dr. Ron Tilson, the Conservative Director of Minnesota Zoo affirms this truth about this special animal:

…tigers (white tigers) are the most charismatic animal on earth. Their appeal is universal. “They are the alpha predator who used to kill and eat us,” he says. “We cannot help but be in awe of their power and grace. Tigers represent everything fine and decent and powerful. Everything those people would like
to be. It’s all an ego trip—big guns, big trucks, and big tigers. (Tilson, at: www.bigcatrescue.org)

This revelation makes it clear that tigers (specially the white tigers in this research) are class apart with charismatic universal appeal; being much respected animal across the world, may it be Siberian white tiger, its American counterpart or Indian Bengal Royal Tiger. The last clan is always held in high esteem and known for its power and grace having perilous reputation in the subcontinent. The white tiger, thus, cannot be denied its rightful place in the jungle, being hero among other animals and the hero of the novel viz. Balram Halwai shares many of such characteristics which would be clear with analytical evaluation of his character. As white tiger Balram is also solitary being in Delhi’s urban jungle keeping aloof and away from other drivers who are indulged in gossips about their bosses. Instead, he takes it sensible to abstain from social gatherings of chauffeur community, spending time in making plans and schemes inside the car while waiting for his employer, “…But if the driver sees his free time as an opportunity, if he uses it to think, then the worst part of his job becomes the best”. (WT 149) Such solitariness coupled with ability to have designs in mind imparts special ability to Balram to at once sneak up on the prey when the opportunity comes. He finally emerges triumphant after committing the murder of Ashok.

Balram is bestowed with skills to work and hunt at night; with special stealth and hearing abilities he can successfully eavesdrop, overhear to get the useful information of the politics of the social happenings in his working place. This is his school of life full of learning, helping him to wait and hit the iron when it is hot, “He and Pinky madam would sit in the back of the car, chatting about life, about India, about America—mixing Hindi and English together—and eavesdropping on them, I learnt a lot about life”. (47) As a tiger cleverly keeps vigil and surveillance on its prey and systematically gathers information about them Balram keeps his ears and eyes open all the time when around feudal landlords. Like a true white tiger Balram successfully manages to create his own empire and becomes an unchallenged emperor in Bangalore. Actually, Balram has been intentionally projected as esoteric and class apart from the millions chicks and inferior animals in the Rooster Coop as he finally manages his safe exit and subsequent rise. The following description reveals that how
Balram alias Munna came to be chosen as representing a separate class of his own—different and excellent from the crowd of other boys:

The inspector pointed his cane straight at me. ‘You, the young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots. In any jungle, 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’
‘That’s what you are, in this jungle.’ (35)

The government official on inspection himself sounded different and honest unlike corrupt school teacher; the inspector being honest with keen insight to trace out the exceptional species like white tiger amongst various animals of dubious propensities. At the fag-end of the story there comes the stance of identification and strong association of Balram’s being with the white tiger in the National zoo in Delhi. The description of various animals in the zoo symbolically speaks of the Indian society wherein the protagonist along with his nephew Dharam confronts the white tiger and faints imbibing personality of the tiger. Through the desire of the beast to escape the cage Adiga artistically hints the desire and ability of Balram to break the social shackles down and get free. Dharam writes this spectacle in a letter to granny:

I called out the people around me, and we carried Uncle to a banyan tree. Someone poured water on his face. The good people slapped Uncle hard and made him wake up. They turned to me and said, ‘Your uncle is raving—he is saying goodbye to his grandmother. He must think he’s going to die.’ Uncle’s eyes were open now. ‘Are you all right, Uncle?’ I asked. He took my hand and said, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry. I asked, Sorry for what?’ And he said, ‘I can’t live the rest of my life in a cage, Granny. I’m so sorry,’ (278)

The description embodies the artistic metaphysics of the novelist to propound the idea of liberation and revolt. Balram is artistically likened to the white tiger, a rare species which observes its own style of freedom and majesty. Balram’s utterance of the reluctance to stay any longer in the cage is addressed to the granny and thus to the
forefathers of the working poor class too, who have been adept to slavery in the Coops. This incident imparts ample spunk to Balram to pull his socks to liberate himself from perennial slavery and rise as an entrepreneur by killing his employer. Even as a child Balram stays apart from other children; lonely, absorbed, lost, staying awe-struck to the creation and to something beyond and alien such as the relics at Laxmangarh which always kept him struck with its natural but mysterious beauty. Kusum, his grim and gruesome granny, complains his father of this tendency, “He just stood there gaping at the fort—just the way his mother used to”. (41)

By imparting him the esoteric attributes of white tiger Adiga has projected Balram as a potent instrument of liberty and freedom from feudal bondage. Through this artistic human instrument he heralds the advent of new era generation who are bold and free enough to deter and challenge the social bondages like marriage, clan, service etc. Unlike millions, Balram as an instrument or an agency, has been set to be top banana in the war of freedom struggle; he has resistance to the temptation of marriage, so-called life of contentment made to rear family for abiding by the feudalistic norms perpetually. No doubt, marriage is a socio-political institution to put cultural, economic and other obligations which ensures the cycle of cultural singularity go on; the poor remains within the bars of Coop for ever owing to this necessary obligation called ‘marriage’. French thinker Vatin C. gives critique of such nuptial obligation in his book, Recherches sur le mariage et la condition de la femme mariée a l’époque hellénistique (1970):

Developed in this way, marriage contracts bring the husband and the wife into a system of duties or obligations that are not equal, certainly, but are shared. And this sharing occurs not in the name of the respect due to family, which each of the two marriage partners represents, as it were, in the state of marriage, but on behalf of the couple, its stability and its internal regulations. (Vatin Qtd. in Michel Foucault 76)

There may be many like Balram, freedom-loving warriors in this war of liberation, but are strategically curtailed and contained through certain enslaving social agencies like marriage. Kusum, in the novel, being prototype of feudal and social norms, takes this move of containing this free soul called Balram by entangling him into the coils
of *sansar*, but he is a white tiger to make his own ways and cannot be tamed into marriage:

‘We’ll fix up the wedding for later this year, okay? We’ve already found someone for you—a nice plump duck. The moment she has her menstrual cycle, she can come here.’

There was red, curried bone and flesh in front of me – and it seemed to me that they had served me flesh from Kishan’s own body on that plate.

‘Granny,’ I said, looking at the large piece of red, curried meat, ‘give me some more time. I’m not ready to be married.’

Her jaw dropped. ‘What do you mean, not yet? You will do what we want.’

She smiled. ‘Now eat it, dear. I made chicken just for you.’ I said, ‘No.’ ‘Eat it.’ She pushed the plate closer to me. Everyone in the household stopped to look at our tussle.

Granny squinted. ‘What are you, a Brahmin? Eat, eat.’

‘No!’ I pushed the plate so hard it went flying to a corner and hit the wall and spilled the red curry on the floor.

I said, ‘I’m not marrying!’ (WT 85)

This candid denial for marriage signifies Balram’s boldness and affirmation of the conviction to excel in life; to rise from the perennial drab and web of mundane and miserable life. The image of red meat, compared to his brother Kishan’s own flesh, signifies the reality of working class people who are put into the burning fire upon which the feudal have been roasting their geese. Though granny’s stubborn command for nuptial bondage is a ring master’s whip that is used to tame many, yet Balram shows enough deterrence to such threat and evades the trap of nuptials. Being the end product of sly slavery to feudal, Kusum does not forget to use different tactics of taming the wild through pleasing ways, but he is the white tiger to remain unmoved. In fact, Kusum here represents the whole of the community wherein people in general have been conditioned to accept marriage as inevitable for maintaining different forms of life.

However, rare species such as Balram, the white tiger, are bestowed with distinctive propensity to develop the ego and self-identity, going on non-trodden path
to liberation away from all bondages and slavery. Adiga skillfully makes it clear in the novel that the post-modern global atmosphere in the twenty first century can provide ideal opportunities to those underdogs who really want to excel, escaping marriage bondage and politics. Foucault relates to this fact, “The work of historian suggests several reasons for this development of the cultivation of the self and for the concurrent modulation in the ethics of pleasure. Two factors seems especially important: changes in marital practice and modification in the rules of political games.” (Foucault 71)

Marriage, therefore, is a potent means to put the wild into social shackles or in Rooster Coop; never lets any individual to try to break fetters and the cycle of feudal system of exploitation goes on. Nonetheless, Balram, as distinct species, has nerves to devise a way to his freedom; does not respect the social and family codes by denying the proposal of marriage. It is because of his being lofty in thoughts and free spirited in nature that he finds substitutes of carnal desires, “A whore? That's for people like me, sir. Are you sure you want this?” (WT 216) Had he been prototype of moral hero this novel could have found its end with tragic note. He is not a prude monk of Adiga nor this story being the didactic sermon to preach self denial in conformity with Indian socio-spiritual reality.

While holding different dimensions of Balram’s person critically into pieces, at least two aspects prominently leap up into critique. One is the special propensities of white tiger in him helping him cruse along the less trodden path towards liberation unlike motley inferior and ordinary animals in Indian farm house. Second, his choicest preference for entrepreneurship which ensures one’s authority over his profession instead of serving others in the tune of feudal system. Apart from freedom in one’s career the entrepreneurship also involves self learning, determination and belief in self. The protagonist makes it clear to Mr. Jianbao, relating this grim Indian reality of half baked Indians as well as of Fully formed fellows, “But pay attention, Mr. Premier! Fully formed fellows, after twelve years of school and three years of university, wear nice suits, join companies, and take orders from other men for the rest of their lives. Entrepreneurs are made of half-baked clay.” (11) Here, Adiga does not heighten Balram’s story so much to sound alien to the common readers but he
connects his success story as an entrepreneur to his humble origin as a half-baked Indian.

With this concept of entrepreneurship and thus of self belief and economic freedom the novel has been unwelcomed by certain moralists who expect a protagonist too spiritually and morally strong to abstain from moral degradation. The course of spiritual transcendence would have gone the ways of canonizing the protagonist to the heights, beyond the identification of millions of such underdogs. Mammon is the pivotal power in modern globalized scenario and this is the material transcendence that matters as great deterrence for coping with cynical hostile society. Through such ways of attaining Mammon blessings for have-nots Adiga makes an artistic attempt to put a breach to the shackles of colonial writings, Balram emerging as the Promethean icon to decolonize himself and paving the way for many.

Marxist concept of economic freedom for the uplift of poor from exploitation seems to have come down with artistic skills of Adiga as he artistically projects the materialistic nirvana of the protagonist as an escape. Karl Marx had propounded the theory that relates economic growth to all other developments:

Marx identified the production relations of society (arising on the basis of given productive forces) as the economic base of society. He also explained that on the foundation of economic base arise certain political institutions, laws, customs, cultures etc., and ideas ways of thinking, morality etc. These constituted the political/ideological superstructure of the society. That all of this not only have as their origin in the economic base but also ultimately correspond to the character and development of that economic base, i.e. they way people come together in order to produce and reproduce the material requirements of life. (Kinger 43)

Faroq Ahmad Sheikh, a budding scholar, critically views The White Tiger being as Neo-Marxist document where Adiga sees material reality in India and senses the necessity of material ascendance for the have-nots like his mouthpiece:

Balram seems to support Marxian viewpoint that the workers have no rights over the products they produce. He says that the slums build the houses for the rich and live themselves in the tents of unhealthy condition. The overall
outlook of Balram, the narrator of the novel, is materialistic. He judges almost everything on material grounds. His attitude towards the world in general has turned materialistic. He analyses every situation on the causality of material. In his opinion, all the social and political systems of the country like the justice, the political bodies and controlling agencies could be controlled by money. The politics and the police agencies, in the novel, have been in the pockets of business firms. (Sheikh, at—*Language in India* vol. 12:5, May, 2012, 107)

This critic sounds right in his analysis of the protagonist who is obsessed with materialistic outlook to judge everything in life, following just Mammon the moral obligations to the society notwithstanding. Balram goes down to drain by murdering his rather benevolent employer Ashok Sharma; becomes the part and parcel of prevailing corruption by bribing the police officer, manipulating the facts of the accident caused by his employee driver and so on. Balram’s inner perception is shaped by present day materialistic India. Wide spread capitalism has radically turned the values upside. The people under capitalistic influence prefer material progression to social, moral or cultural ones.

With his literary metaphysics Adiga has endeavoured to take the case of Balram’s materialistic ascendance to the transcendental heights by juxtaposing his materialistic nirvana to that of Lord Buddha’s enlightenment. The enlightenment of entrepreneurship comes through the attainment of the knowledge as driver-cum-servant at Laxmangarh, through spiritual learning in Delhi-Gurgaon B Block high society and finally murdering Ashok and stealing his seven hundred thousand rupees. This post-colonial instance leaves the hint for the others in the darkness that one has to destroy the evil of feudal colonizers irrespective to the fact that this looks benevolent.

The story of Balram, as likened to the Buddhist odyssey through Bihar, is the tactics of escape from the clutches of colonial forces. Balram is modern Buddha with materialistic values in mind unlike one who had come forward to liberate and rid human from sufferings, grief, pain, social disgrace and slavery. Lord Buddha achieved miraculous powers through spiritual enlightenment at Gaya near
Laxmangarh. However, this modern Buddha gets away from Gaya to capitalistic settings in Delhi where even underdogs can find opportunity to excel owing to blessings of globalization in Metro cities. Adiga, has assigned him the task of liberation and escape but through his materialistic nirvana, the success formula of economic freedom got by hook or by crook. Adiga has tried this forced analogy in the following description:

I pulled my feet up onto the seat, got into the lotus position, and said, "Om," over and over again. How long I sat that evening in the car with my eyes closed and legs crossed like the Buddha I don't know, but the giggling and scratching noise made me open my eyes. All the other drivers had gathered around me—one of them was scratching the glass with his fingernails. Someone had seen me in the lotus position inside the locked car. They were gaping at me as if I were something in a zoo. (WT, 193)

Besides this analogy with enlightened Buddha, some critics have also fetched analogy between this modern chauffeur in the war against feudal powers and the godly chauffeur who reigned the chariot of Arjuna against the evils of Kaurvas. But Adiga has deconstructed the mythical notion with reversal of naming of two brothers. Kishan, here, is powerless, fettered with no self belief, smashing coals as human spider at tea shops; yet Balram, who is mythically inferior to Krishna, here, enjoys hold on the power-politics of liberation and escape from colonial perpetuity. Ascribing the mythical strength of Krishana to his protagonist the novelist does compare the functions of two chauffeurs; one in the battlefield imparting wisdom to Arjuna and another one entertains the man in rear seat to relax him down:

I talked to him about the wisdom of my village---half repeating things I remembered Granny saying, and half making things up on the spot—and he nodded. It was a scene to put you in mind of that passage in Bhagavat Gita, when our lord Krishna---another of history’s famous chauffeurs—stops the chariot he is driving and gives his passenger some excellent advice on life and death. Like Krishna I philosophized—I joked- I even sang a song—all to make Ashok feel better.(187)
The material ascendance of an underdog like Balram signifies a form of deterrence to the practice of perennial sway of colonizing feudalism. Denotatively speaking, the term ‘Deterrence’ specifically pertains to crime, legal and punitive politics as it is the use of punishment in the form of a threat to deter people from offending. In today’s social or political scenario deterrence is the buzz word giving the sense of freedom at micro or macro levels. The term deterrence is the nominal form of verb deter which semantically denotes, as the definition in Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary goes, ‘to make somebody decide not to do or continue doing something, specially by making them understand the difficulties or unpleasant results of their actions’. In the narrative the bold action of an underdog deters to feudalistic practices against the poor. Applied in other ways the term connotes creating a sense of fear in the minds of the enemy or opponent by gaining similar type of powers i.e. economic and thus social.

Going by the Marxist doctrine, material or economic empowerment of poor or proletarian is the right way to reconstruction of society. It is on the economic basis, particularly in India, that a few strata of feudal classes have been dominating the rest. And this fact has been induced in the mind of twenty first century dalits or underdogs through spread of globalized education and social awareness. So it may not be wrong notion to agree that material gain by the poor is a form of novel deterrence to the feudal rich, creating sense of fear in their minds for further continuation of any tyrannical move. Analyzing the term deterrence on macro level, while pungently denouncing the nuclear theory of the world’s political powers, Arundhati Roy finds this term to be the crux for the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, “…There will be no war, Nuclear weapons are about peace, not war. ‘Deterrence is the buzzword of the people who think of themselves as Hawks…” (Roy 06)

In this way, theory of deterrence signifies the psychology of fear in the mind of others. At micro level one tries to answer his opponent in almost same fashion as he has been subjected to. In postcolonial world when dalits are also at the threshold of learning and education, they tend to devise some forms of deterrence as social and economic weapon. Regarding sparks of upsurge of modern dalit suppressed, David Hardiman gives account of a particular local called Varils as microcosm:
The basic cause of the mass upsurge of the Varils lay in their abominable condition of wretchedness and their suppression by the tyrant landlords. They had rotten in these conditions for a century unnoticid and uncared for...They lived in a mood of bitter despair. They were anxious to end their slavery. But they did not know how to do it. (Hardiman 104)

In twenty first century India of globalized capitalistic economy Adiga has rightly captured the rascal in an average Indian; the essential approach of such man is shaped by the Mammon, rather than ethical or spiritual. In a country of wide spread starvation, poverty and discrimination one is never expected to stay with imposed moral codes, rather one like Balram waits for right time to execute his malicious deigns for economic gains. But such material success should not be confined to analyzing its modus operandi or its means. He is unscrupulous to the modes or means of his success and that is why certain critics have raised the questions of morality to this heinous instance of murder for rising above miserable reality. Ketaki Dutta in her essay, “The White Tiger: A Tale of Materialistic Success Sans Human Values?” observes:

The moral issue irks the serious reader too. It is natural, that, everyone feels disturbed to read the account of the ruthless murder on a day when a light drizzle seemed welcome and Ashok was in a relaxing mood. No doubt, the master’s fat wallet was Balram Halwai’s sole aim. But how could he turn so ruthless to the lonely person, whose wife has walked out on him lately, and another swanky, deceitful woman has stepped into his life, and who has always gone out of his way to be sweet to Balram? How he could he be so cruel to shove him to the tragic end? No qualms of conscience troubled him, no ethical question assailed him. (Datta 160)

No doubt, this is instance of heinous cold blooded murder, infuriating the readers and putting a question mark to the ethical issues of the novel. Balram, in this point of view, deserves to be judged through villainy as any thinking critic or reader would have sympathy for Ashok and condemnation for the former. However, this onslaught, with Johnny Walker whisky bottle smashed on Ashok’s head, should not be restricted to the plain evaluation. The bottle, the murder weapon, belonged to Ashok himself but
used by Balram. It is symbolic lethal item of feudal landlords themselves used as the weapon by the one whose forefathers have been at receiving end for centuries. Besides, the novel is not the moral fable to ask the protagonist and the others to wait for the God’s vindication for the wrong they have been inflicting.

Notwithstanding the possibility of Adiga’s support through Marxist doctrine to Balram’s ways of success he, being a true artist, also emphasizes the aesthetic ways of liberation throughout the whole narrative. Rather, Adiga sounds keen enough to propound his philosophy of imbibing aesthetics through literature, particularly Urdu, as tool to avert the sense of servitude and fear. Being a Marxist and atheist the novelist is found in the odd pages of the novel satirizing religious hypocrisy, cynicism and hollowness but appreciating spiritual strength of beauty. In no ambiguous terms, this novel can be viewed as the artistic propagation of the idea of beauty and thus of truth, rather than merely being the story of a Dalit’s material success through foul means. It would be starkly erroneous to label the novel as the success mantra in the modern market. In fact, this novel is no less than a classic fable bubbling with rich aesthetics, natural sylvan settings, rich symbols, elaborated nature and country life, natural beauty and so on. The passages and description attain poetics heights when Adiga is found painstakingly focusing on the details of natural beauty and aesthetics sense of the protagonist, “Even as a boy I could see what was beautiful in the world: I was destined not to stay a slave”. (WT 41) He further describes:

So I could only watch. The long loopholes in its wall turned into lines of burning pink at sunrise and burning gold at sunset; the blue sky shone through the slits in the stone, while the moon shone on the jagged ramparts, and the monkeys ran wild along the walls, shrieking and attacking each other, as if they were the spirits of the dead warriors reincarnated, refighting their final battles. (40)

Such descriptions of nature adore the text, adding romantic elements, soothing sense of beauty as an awakening call for proletarians like Balram to take the message of freedom from the clutches of colonizing feudalism. In the poetics of the narrative Adiga refers to a few poets who have given the idea of liberation:
Iqbal, who is one of the four best poets in the world—the others being Rumi, Mirza Ghalib, and a fourth fellow, also a Muslim, whose name I've forgotten—has written a poem where he says this about slaves: *They remain slaves because they can't see what is beautiful in this world.* (40)

Adiga intentionally chooses the poets from Muslim communities, the underdog community in India, yet they are known for resistance to the snobbery for the foreign and economically higher. The idea is very clearly explained here, that those who cannot develop aesthetic sense are bound to be slaves forever. This idea of slavery and servitude owing to the penury in aesthetics cannot be narrowed down to the working class peasants only, but so-called educated Indians, who are caught in the enslaving capitalistic system of serving multinational companies like robots, also come in this category. Those who are sensitive to the beauty around, as the white tiger Balram is, in any form can liberate themselves from any system.

This is the strong aesthetic sense in the author that he does not endorse the ways of violence for achieving freedom for the working class poor. That is why, he seems to dismiss Naxalite Movement in India, believing in bloodless revolution of thoughts like Gandhi who was of the opinion that the slavery is rather state of mind, “Iqbal, that great poet, was so right. The moment you recognize what is beautiful in this world, you stop being a slave. To hells with the Naxals and their guns shipped from China. If you taught every poor boy how to paint, that would be the end of the rich in India.” (275) This is the non-violent way for independence; painting, writing of poetry and appreciating it, relishing literature and art can be the gateway to freedom. Iqbal and other poets of sheer aesthetics are alluded in regular intervals in the pages of the novel; each reference carries the hint of liberation for those who have ample grit and appreciation for beauty. Symbolically the idea of freedom from Rooster Coop, which is in fact not locked from outside, is hinted:

He opened the book, cleared his throat, and read, "'You were looking for the key for years.' Understood that?” He looked at me, wide furrows on his black forehead. "Yes, Muslim uncle." "Shut up, you liar. And listen." He cleared his throat again. "'You were looking for the key for years/But the door was always open!'" He closed the book. "That's called poetry. Now get lost". (253)
Symbolically, this Muslim uncle has been described as a prophet and here he is trying to show Balram, and of course to all, the right path to ultimate freedom through the aesthetics of poetry. He rebukes Balram for having not actually understand the idea in the verse and yet pretending to have understood. The protagonist here represents many who do hear the beautiful poetic messages of wisdom, yet do not learn and discern aesthetics from them. Such poetic reference is the philosophical assurance for Balram’s liberation and ascendance to the heights wherefrom he can lead his own life of utter freedom as an entrepreneur. Here too, the Muslim uncle having literary sense in the poems of the poets like Iqbal, is self-employed and free from the sense of servitude and slavery.

The poetic sense gives Balram ample courage and dignity during adversities and loneliness. The concept of resistance to feudal slavery through poetry keeps trumpeting in his ears, enabling him stick to his modus operandi to the way to freedom. The cognizance of beautiful verse and his taking resort to poetic aesthetics in hours of crisis also bring out the metaphysics of the narrative with classic literary examples. There arises typical Shakespearean situation, though partially, when like Macbeth, Balram finds himself in deep anguish before executing the murder of his employer. Like Macbeth, he is very efficient in his profession, stays energetic in hectic times too, yet finds himself on the horns of dilemma when alone. There runs the concept of sleeplessness when he is sunk in the thoughts of his planning almost same in the way as Macbeth did, the great warrior like a lion, finds it impossible to have sleep before murdering good Duncan.

Still it cried ‘Sleep no more!’ to all the house:
‘Glamis hath murder’d sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.’ (Macbeth 35)

A C Bradley’s scholarly analysis of the pre-murder situation in Macbeth holds key to this analogy with Balram’s situation:

The heart’s sickness which comes from Macbeth’s perception of the futility of his crime, and which never leaves him for long, is not, however, his habitual state. It could not be so, for two reasons. In the first place the consciousness of guilt is stronger in him than the consciousness of his failure; and it keeps him in a perpetual agony of restlessness, and forbids him simply to droop and pine.
His mind is full of ‘scorpions’. He cannot sleep. He ‘keeps alone’, moody and savage. ‘All that is within him does condemn itself for being there.’ There is fever in his blood which urges him to ceaseless action in the search of oblivion. And, in the second place, ambition, the love of power, the instinct of self-assertion, are much too potent in Macbeth to permit him to resign, even in spirit, the prize for which he has put rancours, in the vessel of his peace.

(Bradley 307-308)

Here too, brave Balram, splendid like white tiger, gets the fits of insomnia owing to the tense situation prior to the killing of Ashok. But here poetry strikes again giving him the hint of the key i. e. ways to free will: “Just when I thought I'd never go to sleep, I began reciting a couplet, over and over again. *I was looking for the key for years But the door was always open.* And then I was asleep.” (266-67) Since Macbeth was a general, a warrior, his vision was more appropriately conditioned with certain weapons of warfare and that is why befittingly he sees the hallucinations of dagger before committing the aghast deed of murdering his kind king Duncan.

Whereas, Balram is a proletarian, a servant, whose mind is conditioned with the images of nemesis devices from his feudal masters such as a whip or a flog. And thus, Adiga tries to achieve this appropriateness by applying the hallucination of cane of the watchman to punish him down before the aghast killing of Duncan-like generous Ashok:
What was I planning? I began to sweat. I stared at the anonymous palm prints that had been pressed into the white plaster of the wall. A cane began tapping on concrete—the night watchman of Buckingham B was doing his rounds with his long cane. When the tapping of the cane died out there was no noise inside the room, except for the buzzing of the roaches as they chewed on the walls or flew about. It was another hot, humid night. Even the roaches must have been sweating—I could barely breathe. (WT 266)

In such hour of crisis and predicament both the protagonists are overpowered with pricking conscience while the motif in both the situations is *ambition*. But in the case of Macbeth the seeds of ambition are said to be sown by the governing power of fourth witch viz. lady Macbeth. In fact, the lady, being the instrument of tragic flaw for the hero, instigates his hidden ambition which leads Macbeth to catastrophe. Her challenging instigation to his manliness brings better of devil in Macbeth and he commits the crime. However, in this post-modern discourse of freedom the modern chauffeur is not instigated instantly by any agency of catastrophe, notwithstanding provoking rebuke by his granny Kusum. And this granny is projected no less than a witch, always rubbing her ugly forearms, a symbolic readiness to wrestle, keen to implement her evil designs to affect the destinies, “Sly old Kusum! She had this habit of rubbing her forearms hard when she felt happy, as if it were a piece of ginger she was grating to release grins from. Her teeth were all gone, but this only made her grin more cunning.” (15)

The concept of typical poetic justice is avoided in both the situations as there ensue the cases of cold blooded murders and no justifying punishment for the evils as both the victims are benevolent to their murdering subordinates. While the great Shakespearean classic drama attains the heights of tragedy with climax while this quintessential Postmodern novel ends with no conclusions but interrogations. Mythical archetypes, legends, allusions etc. are deployed by the creative writers to provide substance to the actions carried out in the concerned narratives. Adiga in this novel, gives colourings of Macbethian representation to earn out literary vindications for the action of the protagonist of ambivalent colourings. However, Adiga shapes the destiny of his protagonist in contrast of Shakespearean legend as Balram escapes not only from feudal retribution but there does not ensue any bloodshed in the end. Unlike
Macbeth, this postmodern hero is smart enough to avoid catastrophe by getting better of his conscience. Ironically, art and poetry have been deployed by the author as the Balram’s saviour and as tools of justifying his guilt through concept of liberty.

Furthermore, this special love for literariness as enforcement of purgation of mind can be viewed having literary analogy with Miltonic concept of rebellion impending here under the sluggish texture of the novel. Most celebrated and acclaimed literary epical work *The Paradise Lost* (1665) is a representation of Satanic rebellion against the authority of God; the literary masterpiece projects the artistic concern of Milton for Puritanical individualistic freedom against the influence of British regime. In this artistic endeavour for liberation of Dalits Adiga deploys his literary acumen in yoking this analogy with his atheist Marxist zeal to overthrow any feudalistic authority:

> You are familiar already with my love of poetry—and especially of the works of the four Muslim poets acknowledged to be the greatest of all time. Now, Iqbal, who is one of the four, has written this remarkable poem in which he imagines that he is the Devil, standing up for his rights at a moment when God tries to bully him. The Devil, according to the Muslims, was once God's sidekick, until he fought with Him and went freelance, and ever since, there has been a war of brains between God and the Devil. This is what Iqbal writes about. The exact words of the poem I can't remember, but it goes something like this. God says: *I am powerful. I am huge. Become my servant again.* Devil says: *Ha!* When I remember Iqbal's Devil, as I do often, lying here under my chandelier, I think of a little black figure in a wet khaki uniform who is climbing up the entranceway to a black fort. (86-87)

Satan, though the evil rebellion, was artistically projected as having ample grit for mutiny against the God; could corrupt Eve with apple of knowledge and thus created a pandemonium. Here, the ways of poetry and thus of beauty serve as the effective tool for realizing one’s spiritual innermost being which recognizes the value of freedom. This Mephistophelian devil in khaki uniform accumulates courage to get into mysterious but fascinating black fort, much to the dismay of surrounding monkeys which epitomize disarray of the poor in Rooster Coop, the half-baked
Indians who are perpetually caught in the scheme of exploitation as human spiders. Years back, some critics such as Romanticist William Blake vehemently opposed Milton for being in devil’s party and this advocacy of khaki clad devilish rascal has also earned some criticism.

With the awestruck postmodern protagonist’s climbing the black fort, Adiga’s atheism, and thus mutiny against feudal rule, also climbs up to culminations when he describes the Keatsean concept of beauty and truth in his vagabound picaresque hero, “I see the little man in the khaki uniform spitting at God again and again, as I watch the black blades of the midget fan slice the light from the chandelier again and again.” (87-88) The Miltonic concept of rebellion and individual freedom finds ample echo in the biography of this modern Satan in a globalized setting of modern urban India where anyone, irrespective to caste or origin, can take opportunity to excel. In this incredible country the novelist highlights the wonders of democracy; democracy can gift away the opportunity to those who dare to excel, those who can muster the courage to come out the Rooster Coop of slavery. Balram Halwai’s story highlights this fact as the protagonist represents a rare species called white tiger—which is outstanding from the rest, finally emerging into a successful entrepreneur in the bright city Bangalore.

Balram’s childhood hero, Vijay holds the ability to go to down to drain as he lets the corrupt, debauched politician bugger him down. This one time act of debauchery makes him rise to the heights of white clad-devilish status. First he holds the position of a bus conductor, the government job for which the whole subaltern class dreams of; it is the wonder of democracy in this country of unending inequality that he becomes the sidekick of the Great Socialist, the unopposed leader of Laxmangarh. Balram observes this stance of wonder at the bungalow of the Stork, “I waited by the gate and watched. The stork himself came out to see Vijay, and bowed down before him—a landlord bowing before a pig herd’s son! The marvels of democracy!” (103)

Categorically these two instances in the case of Balram and Vijay, rising high in life from the perennial abysmal state, ensure for this novel the place in the category of typical Postcolonial literature. Adiga, as a quintessential Postcolonial novelist, does not seem to lament this and celebrate that, yet devising the ways to break out the
fetters of slavery in the third world for those who dare. In both the cases of Vijay and Balram the path to success goes via servitude but excelling ultimately through foul means. The case of Vijay unravels the prevailing reality of democracy that one can rise above his caste, as he hailed from pig-herd, the lowest among dalits:

Vijay's family were pig-herds, which meant they were the lowest of the low, yet he had made it up in life. Somehow he had befriended a politician. People said he had let the politician dip his beak in his backside. Whatever he had to do, he had done: he was the first entrepreneur I knew of. Now he had a job, and a silver whistle, and when he blew it—just as the bus was leaving—all the boys in the village went crazy and ran after the bus, and banged on its sides, and begged to be taken along too. I wanted to be like Vijay—with a uniform, a paycheck, a shiny whistle with a piercing sound, and people looking at me with eyes that said, *How important he looks.* (31)

In fact, the paths of liberation of two are projected as antithetical tactics in contrast to the mode of rebellion of Balram’s father Vikram Halwai, who was the only courageous man among fear-ridden, colonized, distressed, helpless rickshaw-pullers. This thinking man could very well sense the changing time and atmosphere in future thus investing hopes in Balram through education:

The rickshaw-pullers parked their vehicles in a line outside the tea shop, waiting for the bus to disgorge its passengers. They were not allowed to sit on the plastic chairs put out for the customers; they had to crouch near the back, in that hunched-over, squatting posture common to servants in every part of India. My father never crouched—I remember that. He preferred to stand, no matter how long he had to wait and how uncomfortable it got for him. I would find him shirtless, usually alone, drinking tea and thinking. (23-24)

Notwithstanding his courage, this previous generation rebellious underdog could never manage to carve out the path of liberation and died in haughtiness owing to the lack of opportunities and mind quintessential of twentieth first century. He has to stay as rickshaw-puller, specter-thin, doomed with fatal tuberculosis—dying abjectly in the want of treatment at government hospital. What makes such defiance die down
within itself is the want of homogenous support; the other rickshaw-pullers never showed courage against the feudal landlords with Vikram Halwai. One subaltern dalit endeavours to accumulate courage and protests against tyranny but others show meekness submissiveness. Gautam Bhadra gives critique of such duality in the behaviour of subalterns, “It is well known that defiance is not the only characteristic of the behaviour of subaltern classes. Submissiveness to authority in one context is as frequent as defiance in another. It is these two elements that together constitute the subaltern mentality.” (Bhadra, 62)

However, Vikram Halwai’s sacrifice bears fruit in the next generation as his son who, though has inherent haughtiness and defiance, takes resort to different ways and succeeds. Balram does acknowledge his father but simultaneously states the fact of difference, “Mr. Vikram Halwai, rickshaw-puller—thank you! My father was a poor man, but he was a man of honor and courage. I wouldn't be here, under this chandelier, if not for his guidance.” (WT 23) Although, Balram is endowed with esoteric majesty of white tiger besides sheer aesthetic sense, yet like Vijay, he embarks his journey of freedom through jerky ways of driving for the feudal landlords. The instances of Vijay and Balram can be viewed as model of liberation tactics for have-nots through debauchery and aesthetics respectively. The means and ways of success chosen by these underdogs may be any, but such escape and liberation from Rooster Coop is a form of deterrence against the feudal tyranny-- an onslaught to colonizing feudalism.
Works Cited


**Internet Source**

