

ARAVIND ADGIA'S THE SELECTION DAY: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT-- Adiga's fourth work, *Selection Day*, is set in the world of cricket in Mumbai. The novel primarily deals with the hidden realities associated with Indian cricket in the present times. IT ALSO FOCUSES on the conflict of interest between money and talent, caste and capacity, and resourcefulness and manipulation. The novelist has also analyzed the politics economics of cricket which has lost credibility and reputation in India over a period of time. The novel throws light on the social and economic aspects of INDIAN CRICKET. Adiga has delivered a clear message that cricket has been polluted because of the politics and other unprofessional considerations in India. Adiga has emerged as a prolific writer in the present times. He gets under the skin of these characters and writes about them with insight, empathy, concern and commitment. All his works have great social and political concerns and implications. The works of Adiga are considered as welcome additions to the body of knowledge in English Commonwealth Literature. All the works are indeed penetrating pieces of social and political commentaries which warrant the attention of the stakeholders of governance and development in India.

Keywords-- Aravind Adgia's the Selection Day: An Overview

I. INTRODUCTION

Adiga authored *Selection Day* novel which is set in the world of cricket in Mumbai. It deals with the mysteries surrounded by the cricket game which is known for corruption, casteism, sexuality, nepotism and other ugly things. The novel has invited the attention of the readers for presentation of the hidden truth about cricket in India.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is understood researchers have concentrated on the marginalisation, quest for identity, Indians' thought process and the reflection of India and the theme of importance of cricket given in India is not given much importance. So it becomes importance to make a study on this area.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive and analytical methodology is used to study the novel.

IV. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- To study the importance of cricket in India.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the political status in India.
- To understand how a poor becoming a star in the cricket.
- To know the importance given to cricket in India.

VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The novel deals with the story of two children Radhakrishna and Manjunath who were forced by their father Mohan Kumar to play cricket for the sake of name, fame and money. They were brought from a village in Alur taluk of Hassan district of Karnataka state to Mumbai to play cricket and become stars. Mohan Kumar was present when his children practiced cricket in the ground. The Coach Sawant was happy about the involvement of the father in the game. "My sons always play better when I am watching them" (Adiga, 2016:01).

Mohan Kumar had also prescribed certain rules about food habits, lifestyles and cricket to his children. The novel also presents certain facts about life in India and abroad. "Poor Muslims were becoming revolutionaries in Egypt and Syria and kicked out their governments and presidents" (Adiga, 2016:02). Adiga has offered a realistic picture of Indian society in the novel. "If people sweat it means they are honest" (Adiga, 2016:03).

The novel presents that money, family background and political influence matter most in Indian cricket. The poor are not considered for any important positions in any field in spite being capable. They are left out of the race for only because they are poor. It is going for decades together and the poor wait for their for time strike back at the appropriate time.

Adiga presents Anand Mehta of Mumbai as an aristocrat who was involved in the business of cricket as a sponsor for the sake of money. Mohan Das Kumar of Alur taluk of Karnataka is a poor man who entered into an agreement with Anand Mehta. "One-third of all future earnings of my two sons Master Radha Krishna and Master Manjunath will be the legal property of Shri Mchta, in return for his commitment to sponsorship" (Adiga,2016:05).

Mohan Kumar's brother was involved in the sale of books in Mumbai for the sake of livelihood. He was arrested by the police for photocopying, binding and selling the books. It is common thing in India that the big fishes escape with the help of our politicians; it is the poor people who languish in jails for years together for trivial crimes. Adiga presents the loopholes of the law and order system in modern society which protects the big thieves and traitors who are protected by the vested interests.

Adiga has expressed great faith in Mumbai city and considers the people of Mumbai, a symbol of national integrity. The integrity of common man in Bombay is well-known and appreciated and celebrated across India. Adiga states with pride that stars are born in slums. "A star rises on the horizon: not in the city, the traditional nursery of cricketing wizardry, but across the creek, in the suburb of Navi Mumbai" (Adiga, 2016:08). Adiga projects himself as the writer of common masses in contemporary India.

Adiga has expressed serious reservations about the cricket culture in India. Sofia, one of the characters observes: "As a matter of fact, I don't know anyone who respects cricket" (Adiga, 2016:09). Adiga recalls the devotion to cricket demonstrated by Eknath Solkar, a famous Indian opening batsman and committed cricketer. His father passed away before the commencement of Bombay-Bengal Ranji final during 1968-69. Solkar performed the rites for his father and immediately returned to Bombay to participate in the Ranji final. "I am here

to do my duty" (Adiga, 2016:10). Bombay took the lead in the first innings and won the Ranji Trophy because of the excellent performance of Solkar.

Adiga also narrated the dictatorial tendency of the organizers of cricket in India. "We have a dictatorship of cricket in this country" (Adiga, 2016:11). The novel also deals with the serious social evil like female infanticide in India. We are in a very serious condition as millions and millions of women from our country because of female feticide and infanticide. We cannot make any business decision unless we are familiar with the sex ratio of this country as a result of decades of selective abortion. "I predict that young Indian males, lacking women to marry or even to mate with, are likely to become progressively more deranged" (Adiga, 2016:12).

The novel also refers to certain historical contexts such as Partition, the Bengal famine and Gandhi-Nehru family and the greater horror they had deposited here in the nineteenth century, the Indian Penal Code. Adiga considers the law book as irrelevant and uncalled for in contemporary India.

The novel puts the search light on the corrupt tendency in the selection of cricket players. The Coach states: "Ten thousand rupees. It is for your own son, after all. He'll learn from retired Ranji players. And we'll put in a word on Selection Day, we'll godfather him, don't worry about that" (Adiga, 2016:13). Cricket has lost sanctity and credibility in India due to these unethical and unhealthy practices.

Adiga has noted that there is a pressing need to fight anti-intellectualism in India. He is highly critical of sensationalism promoted by Indian media which is the joke of the world (Adiga, 2016:14). The novel contains certain relevant details about the decreasing morality in contemporary India. "Look at these buildings, stuffy with seventies' concrete and ninetieth century morality. Hollow, hollow, the concrete buildings are all hollow. The fat middle class is hollow. So let us get rid of the farce that Indians are a most moral race, that only married people should live in good buildings, girls should be virgins and homos should be in jail, let us rid ourselves of the Victorian Hindu Penal Code" (Adiga, 2016:15). Adiga has expressed his firm conviction for the creation of a just society in India on the basis of human and moral values.

Adiga appreciates the usefulness of the game of Chess. "Chess improves memory, inner strength and character. Chess develop methodical precise and logical thinking. Chess promotes creativity and true imagination. Chess shows there is no substitute for hard work" (Adiga,2016:16).

Manju had played for India Under-19 and for Mumbai, three seasons in the Ranji. The novel narrates the homosexuality between Manju and Javed. Adiga practically endorses homosexuality as a liberal writer. The novelist delivers the message to Manju not to go back into cricket to avoid martyrdom to this mediocrity. Man's cruelty to man is a dominant theme in the book which tells the story of rural youth who come to the city in search of new opportunities. The novel indicates the remarkable talent of Adiga who is a feather on the cap of Commonwealth English Literature.

Adiga has dealt with the inhuman face of cricket in India which is the strongest national bond (Bhattacharya, 2016:17). Adiga has primarily dealt with the conflict of interest between talent and manipulation in the field of cricket in India. Adiga has cast a censorious eye on the cruelty and nonchalance of a cricketing culture in India. The story tells that some boys rise and some fall, where heroes are hoisted over shoulders and discarded within no time.

It unfolds in India's biggest, flashiest city, which is deftly portrayed as a place of natural fecundity and human corruption. The question of what is real and what is fake recurs throughout the novel, and resonates outside its

pages. Adiga's novels tells us two kinds of literary styles: telling and showing writing and writing of journalese. The novel reveals the neglect, sexuality and corruption involved in contemporary Indian cricket (Philip, 2016:25). The novel treats the national craze for cricket as a symptom of moral decadence.

The novel is a very moving and interesting story of people who aspire for many things in their life and their discontent in the contemporary urban India. Adiga seems to be the first writer to truly depict the cricketing world after India won World Cup in 1983 as a source of social mobility. Adiga meets the challenge with a novel that has ambition, originality, ethics, morality and sociological insight into different aspects of life. Adiga has portrayed the lack of decency, morality and sanctity in Indian cricket due to increased corruption, casteism and nepotism.

He has effectively portrayed the illegal and immoral aspects of Indian cricket (Gupta, 2016:21). The novel is a tale of two boys who will divide success and failure evenly between them is far too simplistic for a novelist of his caliber and anyway, success in sport can be the most temporary state, and is never without a personal cost. Adiga tells that the noise of the world doesn't fall away. It is always there, drowning out everything, even love. Adiga's novel deals with the area of darkness in urban Indian cricket.

The novel is about family, exploitation and the desire to become more than what one is. Adiga has presented the corrupt elements of Indian cricket which have marginalized the talented youth representing the backward sections of society. Indian cricket is also involved in some illegal practices such as match fixing and ball tampering which brought bad reputation to gentlemen's game. Adiga impedes growth of his characters which results in a spasmodic narrative. The novel is also full of intelligent and keen observations about what is happening in the field sports and how politics has degraded the cricket which is form of mass entertainment.

Adiga has explored the known and unknown facts about modern cricket. Cricket is no longer game where the talented get the irrespective caste, creed and class. It fraudulent nature of the game impoverished the young aspirants who have no options in life. Modern cricket is a mixture of corruption, criminality, sexuality and other disorders. It has destroyed the lives of many young and innocent aspirants for no fault of theirs. Adiga highlights various negative forces which are killing the game of cricket. The young generation has leaned towards thin ambition and illusory rewards of fame in the world of cricket.

The novel provides a numerous memorable insights into the human condition, spiced throughout with a strong Mumbai flavor. It is a novel not to be missed but cricket is not the only thing in the lives of people (Mayer, 2016:22). The game has polluted the young minds and weakened their personalities due to certain unhealthy tendencies (Singh, 2017:28). Adiga has portrayed the cruelty, corruption and criminality in modern cricket. It is a cricket novel that maintains a running critique of that pastime. The novel tells about the Mumbai's slums and Adiga stands like a star cricket batter (Garner, 2017:20).

Adiga tells that big dreams are followed by the big delusions. Adiga invests even his minor characters with pathos and depth. The book also vividly captures a present-tense sense of India's social anxiety as hoopla over the country's much touted economic opportunities has toppled over into a general desperation. Adiga also focuses on the double standard and cultural history apart from universal popularity that exists in Indian cricket. The novel casts a beady eye on the specious myths surrounding cricket and its negative implications on society. Cricket had brought glory to few and agony to many in India due to several complexities. The novel will benefit the literary fiction readers with great concern and creativity. Adiga has presented the corruption in the sports

based on class divisions in India. There is also a good deal of humor, often very perceptive and coming at unexpected moments, startling the reader into introspection.

Adiga has contributed a meaningful novel which involves motivation, love, self-sacrifice, and personal growth with reference to Indian cricket (McCartney, 2017:23). The novel consists of subtle characterization, nuanced depiction and powerful descriptive passages. The intense narratives on the cricket pitch are deftly delivered in the novel (Garewal, 2017:19). Adiga primarily deals with homosexuality, corruption and other ugly aspects of Indian cricket. Finally, the novel loses its absurdity as it gains momentum giving detailed information about game and India.

One can still thoroughly appreciate the predicaments, conflicts, and torments of Adiga's characters (Powers, 2017:26). The novel develops beyond social satire. Selection Day is about contemporary India through the culture of Mumbai cricketering world. The novel explores the depth of a person's inner feeling that one can hint at. There is also space in the novel for warmth, eroticism, and love in a novel that can be called anti-romantic. Adiga's disgust with the inequity, exploitation, and hypocrisy of Indian society runs through the novel in a subtle, acidic current.

The novel charts a rags-to-relative-riches trajectory. It has more in common with the former than the latter - charged with feverish energy, imbued with vivid color and possessing an equivalent cricket page-time. The novel unravels the tremendous grit and fierce inner conflicts that come with the pursuit of revenge in the game of cricket. It presents the hidden manipulation, mismanagement and barbarism involved in the game in India. It is an exuberant and incisive novel which talks about the path to glory in cricket.

The novel is written in a beautiful language with eccentric and original characters. The plot of the novel moves at a brisk pace. The themes of ambition, failure, success, fear, threats to freedom are all explored at the personal as well as national level. India's relationship to cricket has been described as an obsession, a love affair, a national craze, even a religion. The novel is constructed around the crucial selection day for the Mumbai Under-19 cricket team. It is an all-male novel, deliberately challenging heteronormative conventions, but incongruently so. The homosexual overtones seem contrived and dissonant, but provide a certain depth to the novel that would otherwise have been about cricket (Menon, 2017:24).

VII. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adiga primarily narrated the human cruelty in the modern cricket in India.
- Adiga found that cricket has become a means of corruption, manipulation and exploitation in modern India.
- Adiga pointed out that cricket is a fraud sport which deprived opportunities to the talented and resourceful players in India.
- Adiga described that cricket has become a symbol of exploitation and deprivation in modern times.
- Adiga presented the contemporary world of Indian cricket known for corruption and casteism.
- Adiga emphasized that cricket has become inhuman means of exploitation of the young generation through unprofessional considerations.

- Adiga observed that cricket was known for sexuality and criminality which polluted the young and talented minds in India.
- Adiga displayed the deep and intrinsic silliness of Indian cricket.
- Adiga remarked that cricket reflects wealth and rot, decadence and decay, cricket and corruption in India.
- Adiga demonstrated the depths of a person's inner feeling and cruel and violent reality of India's liberalized economy.
- Adiga presented the homosexual overtones besides providing a certain depth to the novel about cricket in India.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Adiga used rhetorical devices for emphasizing the issues vibrantly and also to bring awareness among the people about serious social and political issues and concerns. Adiga's works have provided a comprehensive picture of the social-cultural and political transformation in India in the age of globalization. Adiga endeavored to focus on the reinterpretation of reality in terms of content, form, language and other literary aspects. Adiga employed many beautiful expressions and focused on the use of language in order to give crystal clear picture of what is going on the contemporary India for the readers. In this context, globalization has been fostered by a ground swell outside redundant social and political structures. Aravind Adiga has undoubtedly joined the bandwagon of new wave of Indian writers by producing parallel literature with highly progressive social and political concerns and perspectives.

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