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The Art of Self-Realization in Aravind Adiga's Selection Day

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Abstract

An Outstanding novelist of human predicament, Aravind Adiga is ranked with the great masters of contemporary Indian English fiction. He is seriously concerned with the emotions, thoughts and identities of his characters. Adiga has been recognized with the prestigious awards like Man Booker Prize for *The White Tiger* (2008) and Tata Literature Book of the year award for the novel *Selection Day* (2016). *Selection Day* is a dark travel, which focuses on the contemporary cricket game in Mumbai. Adiga pictures cricket journey through the historic 150-year-old Mumbai of Cricket. He also shows Kanga Leaguers, which is one of the biggest and oldest cricket tournaments conducted in Mumbai. *Selection Day* is a new heart-rending, disconcerting and fascinating story of contemporary urban India.

Keywords: Humiliation, Alienation, Poverty, Hegemony, Migration.

1. Introduction

Adiga's writings seek to show the complex responses of poor and rich. The novel *Selection Day* connects the characters both rich and poor. It talks about three Kumars, Mohan Kumar "Mohan" is the father of two brothers. He is a Chutney sales man. Manjunath Kumar "Manju" is the main character in the novel *Selection Day* and he is the younger son of Mohan, Radhakrishna Kumar "Radha" is the elder son. In this story they came from Ratnagiri halli taluka in Alur, the Western Ghats of Karnataka to modern Mumbai. A mix of rich hierarchy and their dreams, intolerant, parental force, oppression, mocking is common during their period. This story explains how brothers are suffering from their father's wish and against their wish.

Yadav Ankur in his article entitled "Cultural Spectrum in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day*" states,

Adiga has foregrounded the parents who want to pursue and realize their own under mind, diminished and failed dreams through their naïve progenies. It is a social and ethical infringement to weigh someone, knowingly with your own dreams. They unknowingly deny the freedom of their child, cage them psychologically and captivate their choices, needs, desires, urges, speeches and even relations with other children. As a result, these children develop the feelings of resentment and bitterness towards the society in general. (156)

In this story three Kumar are from poor and low caste back ground. They move from their village Western Ghats to Mumbai and practice cricket every day. Mohan their father eagerly waits to erase their poverty, So that Mohan provides all his energy to his sons and decides to involve his sons to get cricket training. Mohan imitates his pickle owner, and had a dream to become rich. So that he pressurizes his sons to do everything. Mohan's poverty makes him as arrogant and a powerful man of his sons.

Manju is a fourteen years old boy, who wants to live a normal life. His childhood aim is to become a scientist but his family is very poor and he could not continue his studies. Compare and contrast in Adiga's winning novel *The White Tiger*, Balram's could not continue his study but his father wanted him to study where as in *Selection Day* Adiga is not using Manjunath Kumar as metaphor like Balram Halwai of *The White Tiger*. Manju the elder son of Mohan goes to England to get cricket training there he got an opportunity to read English news paper and to visit science museum. Author narrates Manju's realization in England.

In just six weeks I can say with the utmost confidence that I adapted superlatively to England. The scorecard speaks for itself. 1446 runs at an average of 45 is very respectable. Beyond the cricket field, I also attended the class and mathematics, and make an effort to read British newspaper every day. I visited the planetarium and two science museums. (142)

All of us in India have seen today school boy are interested in playing cricket. Cricked is not our national game but we imitating white's game. When we attend a lot of school cricket matches in Mumbai, as Aravind Adiga did during the writing of this novel, we can see variations on that familiar theme. For instance, the cricketer called the two,

kumars come 'chutney boys' both of them feel humiliated.
'Chutneyboy! Look at the chutney boy come running.'
'Chutneyboy , who wants to be a Young lion. Come here!'(14).

Manju's humiliation makes him as a slave, "you are a slave" (179). Humiliation comes when someone feels less strong and lack self-confidence leads to depression. On the other hand low and marginalized people are always undergoing humiliation. Manju has to be decided between what others want for him and what he wants for himself.

In the Anand Mehta has helped Manju to get sponsorship, but later he stopped it and asked him to pay Rs. 5000 for every month. Hence he returned to his village and sold his small land to get cricket training. "(n)othing's illegal in India, technically, because everything's illegal in India" (14). Mohan Kumar rules for his sons future.

Cricket Rules

Same as Life Rules. Keep your head absolutely still. Play straight. Do not loft or hit across line before the time is right. Hoard. Hoard runs of hoarded runs

Food Rules

No Chinese, noodles, potatoes, tried or otherwise, or junk food. No oil, no ghee, no sugar. Green , bright vegetables, rich in antioxidants. If I ever catch you, Radha, eating dosa at that dirty stall near your school, I'll wake-your-skin-up.

Golden Proverbs

Learn your proverbs, boys, For instance: 'A thousand maggots in the cowdung patty, but they 're all dead by sunset.' Interpretation? Whatever your worries, they 're gone by six o' clock. That's not a very true proverb, by the way. Here's one more: On its way into town, the king's white horse

turned into a donkey. Think about the meaning of that, my boys. If both of you fail in cricket, boys, the three of us will have sit outside Dahisar station and beg for our food. But if you really want to understand the life that waits for you as adults, this is the only proverb you need: 'Big thief walks free. Small thief gets caught.'(28-29)

One year later Mehta left the brothers to get training. He has changed his idea, and dealing with other one who has joined newly. M. Sneha in her article entitled "Overcoming Marginalization in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day*" refers to the hurdles faced by the gleam of poor and low caste marginalized community.

Revenge is the capitalism of the poor: conserve the original wound, defer immediate gratification, fatten the first insult with new insults, invest and reinvest in spite and keep waiting for the perfect moment to strike back. Because every mocking remark that Mohan Kumar had heard about his plan to produce champions had been stored away in his keen memory, he knew only one way of telling his sons he had secured their future for them. (40)

Javed Ansari is a talented Muslim batsman who met them on Selection Day and the love songs he writes about Manju advises him that cricket is not possible to do your own idea and knocks Manju's hidden worlds. The relationship of the two brothers is significant but ultimately becomes secondary to the one between the younger boy, Manju, and Javed, a good-looking Muslim from a wealthy family who chooses to walk away from cricket and wants Manju to follow him. Manju's attraction to Javed, and his awareness of the hurdles between them is subtly and often surprisingly explored. "Did you take me to see Mr Seth and tell him to say all those things because you want me to give up cricket?" (163). "My father is a violent man, who has beaten me in the past" "Javed: He may try to do again" (230). Mohan knows about Javed "Yes this Ansari boy is a mongoose — a cunning furry mongoose — and only a snake can save my family now--a snake," he said, as Mrs. Shastri, her hands folded on the top of her sons head, nodded" (166). At the end of the novel Mohan feels alienated and he begins to drink and he blabbers "In the old days you solved the problem like that. Come here Manju. Come here Radha"(225).

Monika Agarawal in her article entitled "Aravind Adiga's Contribution to Indian Writing in English" states:

Selection Day is written at an angle to conventional realism; beyond any illusion the reader takes a glimpse of the literary world not through the eyes of the characters but through the author's eyes; so what on the nose emerges most powerfully, as with Hardy, is the author's own personality: the force of his humanity and his social and political vision. (78)

However, the present Indian cricket milieu in which the boys are growing up is vastly different from the one in which Tendulkar and Kambli grew up at the turn of the millennium. Cricket is a big business in India, in ways that were unimaginable 20 years ago. The Indian Premier League, adored by advertisers and bookies and tainted by betting scandals, was born from the abbreviated Twenty20 format, which has attracted new viewers and given rise to the Indian Premier League. While some complain that the IPL is hurting cricket, others argue that it provides opportunities for talented and brave cricketers to rise from anonymity, if not poverty, to wealth and renown. As the novel progresses, it becomes clear that this is the story Adiga who wants to investigate the two boys.

S. Senthil Kumar and Dr. S. Henry Kishore in their article "Social malaise and Cultural Implication in Aravind Adiga *White Tiger* — A Thematic Study" says,

Selection Day is written at an angle to conventional realism; beyond any illusion the reader takes a glimpse of the literary world not through the

eyes of the characters but through the author's eye; so what on the nose emerges most powerfully, as with Hardy, is the author's own personality: the force of his humanity and his social and political vision. (4054)

In *Selection Day* Adiga is not only talking about cricket but also expressed the issues which are disturbing the young boys as such money, corruption, religion, caste and sexuality. Mohan observes his sons Manju and Radha and their ability to hit the ball. Every night he used to pray to lord Subramaniya. At the end Mohan realized cricket is not his work because he lost his sons and wife for the take of cricket. Radha elder brother of Manju fought with cricket teammates and Manju failed to achieve his father's aim to become a cricketer and have relationship with Javed at end Manju lost everything. Mohan feels alienated. But their vocation was true that the three innocent Kumar lost everything. Anamika Sukan in his article "Social realism in the novels of Aravind Adiga" reveals, "In Indian there is no such arrangements for the children who wants to make their career in sport, and also to get the success is very break apart and they became victims of bad addiction like drunkenness in depression" (516).

The original inspiration for *Selection Day* is once Aravind Adiga told in Interview for the scroll online Magazine on 4th may 2017 that he'd always love the Italian neo-realist film directors of the 1950s, men like De Sica, who made *Bicycle Thieves*, and their successors like Pasolini. Nearly fifteen years ago, in a cinema hall in New York, he watched Luchino Visconti's *Rocco and his Brothers*, and was profoundly moved by the story of a group of brothers who migrate from a village to the big city of Milan, in the years after World War II. They hope to become rich, but discover that all they have done is exchange rural. Adiga immediately asked him how old the boys were. Thirteen and fourteen, he said. 'What if the boy, or one of the boys, decides he does not want to play cricket, but wants to be an engineer or doctor?' The businessman said that this wasn't possible. Every Indian boy wants to play cricket.

Mohan Kumar does not have any good relationship with his two young sons and his wife. His wife walked out from the family because of his torture and boys also struggling to survive their lives. Anand Mehta studied and lived in New York, like Adiga, and he shares their ideas. Adiga meets people like him in Mumbai and Mehta does not like. Adiga was born in a big city like Chennai and when he went to Mangalore at the age of seven, he is superior to everyone there because his English was better like his character of the novel Anand Mehta. *Selection Day* is best novel concerning on sport and is not a romantic book. The central idea of the novel is passion for the sports and how people are wanted to be rich.

Samra saeed and Dr. Abrar Ahmed in their article "Delve the modus operandi of the embedded Narrative in the Aravind Adiga's Novel: *Selection Day*" depicts, "the modern- day slavery in the form of a contract written between Anand Mehta the sponsored and Mohan Kumar" (27).

Adiga writes about Mohan's steadfastness in proving his kid's talent, as well as their ultimate attempts to flee him. However, the assertion also adds to the novel's overall vitality, distinguishing between the amazing valour and the horrific inner conflicts that come with the desire of vengeance. Though Radha is widely regarded as the 'best batsman' in Mumbai, Manju is regarded as the 'second best batsman,' this is abruptly reversed, a move from which no one ever fully recovers. Meanwhile, as Manju matures, he wrestles with what the sport demands and what his willingness to give up in exchange.

Cricket represents various things to various personalities, but for the most part, it demonstrates the ideal form of success. The majority of the characters in the narrative feel that success in cricket is the ultimate kind of mastery over one's destiny. Mohan feels that if his sons excel at cricket, it will lift them out of poverty and compensate for his wife's absence. Manju and Radha have no choice but to consider professional cricket as their ultimate aim because their priorities cricket achievement above everything else. As it is now, Adiga's characters are all of these things, but they are also nasty, irrelevant, and corrupt, strewn throughout the entire exuberant spectrum of human ridiculousness with colour. Adiga's Mumbai is a mix of riches and filth, decadence and ruin, cricket and corruption. Is there such thing as freedom amidst all of this? Says *Selection Day*

2. Conclusion

With aspiring stars, fakes, scouts, wheeler-dealers, violent fathers, mothers who flee, dreamers, would-be scientists, and poets, the novel examines how sporting legends are made and dreams are shattered in this cricket-obsessed nation of ours, where fortune favors. The novel is linked by a third-person narrator who focuses on the perspectives of numerous different characters, primarily Mohan, Radha, Manju and Anand Mehta. However, Manju's viewpoint is the most prominent, as he is soon established as the novel's key character. The novel is a collective effort in many ways, as it develops its themes via the thoughts and actions of several different people. As the story unfolds, though, Manju's conflicts and problems become the novel's main focus. On the one hand, the story explores interaction relationships, particularly among the Kumars, and to do so, the narration takes on multiple perspectives to explore each character's motivations and views. The novel's main theme revolves around Manju and the choices he must make regarding his future.

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