



23

**REPRESENTATION OF CASTE-SYSTEM, CRIME AND RELIGION IN
ARAVIND ADIGA'S *BETWEEN THE ASSASSINATIONS***

Parmeshwar Tukaram Mupade

*Research Scholar,
Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University,
Nanded, MS, India*

&

Dr. Dnyanoba B. Mundhe

*Head & Research Supervisor,
Department of English,
Sharda Mahavidyalaya,
Parbhani, MS, India*

=====***=====

Abstract:

Aravind Adiga is one of the most successful writers of this contemporary generation who has given his valuable contribution to eradicate bad customs from Indian society; because all these customs have given an extravagant importance to the religion and castes of human being. All these dark aspects of Indian society have criticised by the writer throughout his all the literary compositions. *Between the Assassinations* is no exception to this because the fiction has also evaluated the same thematic aspects throughout all stories. This work has included the stories happened in seven days in regional area of Kittur. Every story of this work has raised the current issues of Indian society. The work has finely woven with the thematic aspects like caste, crime, religion, poverty etc. All the stories of the fiction have happened in between the period of Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984 and Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991. The life of modern men after the independence has surrounded the growth of technology that has corrupted the mentality of post-colonial human being, this type of persons have become greedy, money oriented, criminal and selfish and forgotten the principles of humanity.

Keywords: Caste System, Religion, Family, Crime, Orthodox, etc.

Introduction:

The first story of the work is started with the burning issues seen in Indian society that is the discrimination based on the outdated values of the caste, community, religion, gender etc. The feeling of being a person of downtrodden caste in Hinduism has created a sense of low status. This orthodox beliefs are deeply rooted into the mind of both the community member either the upper caste or Shudras. Ramanna Shetty, being a secular person has decided to appoint Ziauddin, a Muslim boy on his shop; whereas the other community member of Hindu religion has criticised this secular thinking of Ramanna Shetty. "None of the other shopkeepers near



the railway station would hire a Muslim, but Ramanna Shetty, who ran the Ideal Store, a tea-and-samosa place, had told Ziauddin it was okay for him to stay” (Adiga, 3).

Ramanna Shetty has adopted the principles of humanity, but due to this kind of ideology he has received humiliating treatment from the other culprits of Hindu community; because Ramanna Shetty has helped Ziauddin, a poor Muslim boy. This incident has created worse circumstances for this innocent person. Yet Ramanna Shetty has not dismissed Muslim boy from his shop only for the sake of humanity, because he is deeply influenced due to the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi that has helped him to stay fix over his principles of humanity. Ziauddin has received humiliating treatment from many Hindu and other community members. Being an immature child, he is easily caught into the hands of terrorist and they have tried to take disadvantage of this innocent boy and tried to dilute his mentality on the background of Islam and Islamic Jihad. These things have tempted this boy to search a proper shop for him. At last he comes to know about one shop that is established only for the Muslim, where he has got job for himself. On the other hand, it is an offence against law to appoint a child labour on shop. But the poverty and illiteracy in India have reasonably provided manure to this criminal activity as well as the government also failed to implement the rules in a proper manner. In short, the reader comes to know about the brutality in our Indian society. This story has skillfully elaborated the controversial relationship between Hindu-Muslim; because in pre-independence or post-independence era, it is very easy matter for someone to insert a sense of discrimination, contempt into the mind of both the community members. For example, the boy is caught into the hands of terrorist gang. This terrorist’s gang has tried to dilute the mentality of the innocent boy towards the religious bigotry. “The visitor plants in the mind of Ziauddin the vicious map of communal hatred, He instigates Ziauddin by thrusting upon him the same colonial cartography based on communal divide” (Nimsarkar, 179).

The culprits of every religion have skillfully diluted the mentality of innocent boy like Ziauddin. The main intention of the terrorist is to corrupt the mind of an innocent person on the background of religion to cause riots in the peaceful society through their orthodox thinking and contempt towards the other religion. Ziauddin becomes the victim of such kind of activity. It is considered that the mind of immature children can be easily diluted with any ideology. Thus, the terrorist person likes to dilute the mind of Ziauddin with religious contempt and communal hatred towards Hindu religion. It is also an illegal activity to infect the immature mind just to satisfy their religious goal this has created hazardous circumstances in the society that is come across with the problems like riots and slaughtering of human.

The same situation is seen in seventh story as in Angel Talkies. Through this short story, the reader comes to know about the vital references of caste, crime and religion. This story deals with communal hatred towards different religion and it becomes a source of criminal activity and gradually this proves to be a main reason for the religious riots and criminal activities. In this short story, Gururaj has taken active participation and rises as a star in these miserable circumstances for the victims of riot; because he has saved the lives of many people.

The destruction caused by the Hindu fanatics who had ransacked the shops of Muslim shopkeepers. . . He had wanted nothing more from his columns than to help the victims of the riots (Adiga, 136).



Gururaj is proved to be a star in this critical condition of riot, because the miseries of riot are experienced by the both Hindu-Muslim community. Such kind of religious riot has happened only because of the communal hatred of both side people. But the person like Gururaj took active part in it to save the life of an innocent people as well as tried to create awareness among the people. Such kind of activity is nothing but the political stunts or the act of religious bigots and criminal. Because such people likes to take disadvantage of these events just to fulfil their personal satisfaction. This remark has strikingly highlighted the references of caste, crime as well as religion. Out of this remark the novel has shed a light on communal hatred, religious contempt, and criminal activity. These activity have disturbed the entire life of common people because their means of income source has destroyed by the bigots of both side either it is Hindu or Muslim.

The violence was planned Muslim goons burned Muslim shops Hindu goons burned the Hindu shops. It was real state transaction masquerading as a religious riot (Nimsarkar, 205). 'Religious riot' is a clearly planned activity to cause communal hatred into the minds of people. The religious bigots have thought it as a matter to protect their religion from the hands of other religion; because many priests tried forcefully to tempt the person for the conversion. The historical references have proven that the kings and political leaders have taken the advantage of this kind of activity to fulfil their desires to rule over the nation; whereas the innocent person becomes the victim of their desire. These kinds of people have completely responsible for the contamination of social atmosphere in Indian society. As in *The White Tiger*, the writer deals with two kinds of religious attitude because the characters have not followed a single point of view; sometime the writer has described complimentary view and sometime derogatory view about the religious deity and religion.... He had hung gold tin-foil images of Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, and the fat elephant-god Ganapati. An incense-stick smoked below the images (Adiga, 159).

This description of Goddess has seen in the shop of Mr. Ganesh Pai where Mrs Engineer has arrived to purchase TV. Thus, she has presented his thought like this way about the God Ganesh in the short story *Umbrella Street* the most of the remarks of the writer have seen derogatory point of view about the Gods and Goddess of Hindu religion, but sometimes the protagonist of Adiga's works have seen to us as performing religious gestures and seen to us as religious follower of particular God. Here, in this remark, the writer has criticised the God Ganesh as 'fat elephant-god.' Such kind of thinking is just a matter of disturbed state of mind because the writer has not dealt with a single point of view. Because, the act of belief on God cannot be considered as a superstition, but the writer likes to criticize Gods. In the last story of this fiction *Salt Market Village*, Comrade and Thimma, the father of Murali, conversed about the Marxist ideology regarding the castes and the burning issues in India. Thimma become helpless to marry of his daughter. Thus, he has left his daughter as 'Murali.' She is a nun who has to live alone without the marriage. Here, the writer has highlighted the problem of dowry in our society that has tempted the poor to act like this way. Thus, the writer has commented that the castes are nothing but the reasons of struggles for the poor. This caste question is only a manifestation of class struggle.... I refuse to accept the category of "caste" in our discussion (Adiga, 291).



Comrade being a Marxist refused to talk about the sensitive topic 'Caste' because in his time this matter of caste has become a powerful source for the criminal activity like murder, fighting, quarrel, riot and communal conflict etc. In the Pre-colonial as well as post-colonial era the matter of caste has proved to be a sensitive topic for the discussion of the common people. After the dawn of independence, the rise of modernity has shaken the orthodox mentality of aristocratic person and our Indian society has witnessed the renaissance on the background of social, political, religious and cultural background; because the modern men has become rational to think about everything. Again at the concluding stage of the fiction the writer has used his critical point of view about the God Ganesh and referred the God as 'Sat a giant red statue of the pot-bellied Ganesha' (Adiga, *BTA*, 312).

To conclude in brief, throughout this way the research paper has tried to point out the vital opinions expressed by the writer about the themes like caste, crime and religion. The overall short stories of this fiction *Between the Assassinations* has revolved around these thematic aspects that are skillfully woven by the writer throughout every short stories included in this fictional work. The theme of crime has skillfully decorated by the writer with the help of caste and religion because the references of castes and religious things have become a source of criminal activity. For example, the riots and the fighting between the lower caste and upper caste people have happened only because of these two thematic aspects that are reasonably nurtured the criminal activity. In short, all these themes have inter-linked with each other. The writer has described it throughout every stories of this fictional work.

References

- Adiga, Aravind. *Between the Assassinations*. Picador India an imprint of Pan Macmillan India a division of Macmillan publishers India Private Limited Pan Macmillan India, 707 Kailash building 26 KG Marg New Delhi. 2008. Print.
- Nimsarkar, P. D. and Mishra, Shubha. Aravind Adiga: *An Anthology of Critical Essays*. Creative Books Shanti CB-24, Naraina, New Delhi- 110028. 2010. Print.



This is an Open Access e-Journal Published Under A Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

To Cite the Article: *Mupade, Parmeshwar & Mundhe, Dnyanoba. "Representation of Caste-System, Crime and Religion in Aravind Adiga's Between the Assassinations" Literary Cognizance, V-2 (September, 2024): 154-157. Web.*