

THE SOCIAL IDENTITY OF MUMBAI CHAWLS IN KIRAN NAGARKAR'S *RAVAN AND EDDIE*

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Abstract

Kiran Nagarkar captures the essence of contemporary social reality while also being able to present the realities as critical commentaries. The Indian society is unique in its diversity. The social institution itself is a mash-up of various cultural, religious, and linguistic groups of people. Those people want to live proper life in exacting, still following more than a few decades of freedom. Kiran Nagarkar's novel *Ravan and Eddie*, explores the role play of a significant part in addressing the subject of poverty in Mumbai chawls. This research expects to efficiently portray the tragic plights as well as condition of survival of characters. People's lives in chawls are terrible. The protagonist of this novel Ravan, the son of conventional Hindu parents, and Eddie, the son of Roman Catholic parents, mutiny alongside poverty by means of their actions. They see the world from side to side the lens of understanding, as it appears from the self's encounter by means of the world outside.

Keywords: Social, Cultural, Identity, Chawls, Poverty.

INTRODUCTION

Literature considers in the genuine as well as factual illustration of the society and as well it's the past. It treats ingenuous proceedings as well as their important incidence. Indian novelist's extravagance a variety of surface of history as well as society in a truthful behavior. Novelists similar to Arunthathi Roy, Anita Desai, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Manohar Malgonkar, Ahmed Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh who have all won reputation, distant further than the shores of India have actually augment the inheritance of Indian English literature in a sensible method. The realist kind of literature contract by means of actual life.

Kiran Nagarkar captures the spirit of modern social reality while as well being able to present the realities as serious comments. Indian culture is exclusive in its variety. It symbolizes agreement in variety. The social organization itself is a mash-up of different cultural, spiritual, as well as linguistic groups of people. Kiran Nagarkar inspects together sides of a coin. He not merely remarks on the browbeaten people's approach, performance, and consciousness, other than he as well creates eager explanation on the oppressor. In his examination, he does not standby anybody. He makes known the factual purpose of the colonizers who have long browbeaten Indians. Kiran Nagarkar portrays the conquered people's virtuousness extremely fine. He considers so as to subjugation has debilitated the Indian's consciousness to the point where they cannot envisage, let only start to live, a life with no the tormenter. Their state of mind has been irrevocably wrought to the point where they are satisfied by means of being slaves. There is no wish for freedom in the Indian intellect. Slavery has become so well-

established in the Indian's live so as to they are not capable to smash the custom of being somebody else's slave. Still in the deficiency of the British, the Indians forever seek endorsement on or after someone. This is one of the major causes why rich Indians carry on abusing deprived Indians.

The novels in India can be seen as the result of theoretical, aesthetic, economic, as well as political forces in the country's better life. In spite of understandable district dissimilarity, a fundamental prototype appears to appear on or after shared issue such as Puranic inheritance, hierarchial social arrangement, colonial education, agrarian disjunction, as well as many others that influence together the shape and satisfied of the novel.

Kiran Nagarkar is India's leading novelist whose books are popular like *Ravan and Eddie*, *Cuckold*, *God's Little Soldier* has won by readers as well as devotee everywhere the planet. *Cuckold* is a must-read for anybody by means of an attention in English literature in India. It is Nagarkar's highest attainment and a master work of creative art. In 2000, he won Sahitya Akademi Award for an excellent work.

Ravan and Eddie originally started in 1979 as a Marathi screenplay, it was not released until 1995. Nagarkar's focus on language is historically marked by the language riots of the 1960s, the Shiv Sena riots of the 1990s, and the rejection of Anglicised city names due to the short lives of *Ravan and Eddie*. It appears conceivable that Nagarkar's vision of a uniquely Maharashtrian city, rather than a more cosmopolitan Indian city, was front and centre in his thoughts when he finished *Ravan and Eddie*, given the recent history of widespread and severely violent riots in 1992 and 1993.

Ravan and Eddie, portrays the growth of two young man from suburban Mumbai, named, Ravan and Eddie as they matured from childhood to lively youth among the bustling metropolis. This is a bildungsroman that tells the story of the two main characters' upbringing. These two characters' lives as young adults are told in *The Extras*, the book's sequel.

The novels *Ravan and Eddie* and *The Extras* not only tell an intriguing tale of two young men from Mumbai, but they also depict the city's realistic living conditions, the lives of taxi drivers, and the hardships faced by junior artists also known as 'Extras' who are people who play small roles in films. The story also depicts Mumbai's little-known underground nightlife. In addition to telling a compelling tale of two young men, the two novels produce a priceless record of Mumbaikars' social, cultural, and religious life. For this work, Kiran Nagarkar won both the Apte Award and the Dalmia Award in 1996.

Two young boys who reside on separate levels of the same housing complex and come from diverse origins are the subjects of Ravan and Eddie's life tales. While Eddie is from a Christian household, Ravan comes from a traditional Maratha background. Towards the start of the novel, Eddie's father gives his life to save Ravan. Both families are inevitably drawn into the storyline by the occurrence. The narrative of how these lads get their education is told in the novel. After receiving disparate education, the lads naturally incline towards organised religion groups: one joins the RSS and pursues taekwondo, while the other learns martial arts. The author highlights the distinct quality of Indian society's unity in variety by contrasting two families from two

distinct socioeconomic classes. When discussing some of the ridiculous practises carried out in the name of social, cultural, and religious belief systems, the author is brutally honest.

The novel *Ravan and Eddie* goes beyond merely narrating the tale of two boys who are impacted by many social, cultural, and religious elements. The goal of reading the book should be to comprehend how India's busiest metropolis has developed an internal and external social mechanism. In addition to providing a critical perspective on city life during the day, Kiran Nagarkar is also able to see and critique the lives that are led in the shadowy alleys of the night. As a result, the author paints a thorough picture of suburban life in Mumbai. As the two boys who eventually become the work's protagonists go through their bildungsroman, the novel gradually gives readers a glimpse into Bombay, India's commercial hub, and their suburban lives. It's possible that the social and cultural fabric of the novel serves as the narration's backdrop. It does, however, provide a critical commentary on the prevalent biases and injustices in Indian society in addition to a lively discourse.

The story emphasises the ways in which systematic preaching, disguising itself as organised youth groups, deceives individuals. Actually, Eddie and Ravan, the main characters, join these groups, which ultimately moulds their personalities and characters. On some rites and practices that have no deeper significance, there are amusing critiques and observations. The work attempts to tell the unseen tales that lie beneath the surface of a rich history and legacy, which are frequently inflated for a variety of covert social groups' purposes. Kiran Nagarkar demonstrates how the years of Indian servitude have conditioned them into a colonial mindset that has dulled their senses to the point that they are unable to perceive reality or respond appropriately. The author is harshly critical of the Indian public's lack of interest in recognizing the many injustices that continue to exist in society, as well as their lack of will to fight these problems once they are made public. He demonstrates how the vast majority of Indians, particularly those from middle-class and lower-class backgrounds, turn a blind eye to the crimes carried out in the name of their culture and religion.

In this context, Nagarkar's implication that Marathi is unintelligible to the masses seems to indicate that these renamings are more likely intended to highlight the influence of local political groups than to really reinforce cultural identities. Nagarkar frequently addresses the issue of interpersonal communication and linguistic difficulties in his writing. For instance, in the first few chapters of *Ravan and Eddie*, Nagarkar talks of Victor Coutinho's incapacity to communicate with his beloved Parvati Pawar. He says, "Victor might have spent hours conversing with Parvati. However, who would translate his English or Konkani into Marathi for her? First (1). The two are separated by language, regardless of etiquette or social tradition, even though they live next door in the same chawl.

The remarks Violet, Victor's wife, made to Parvati following her husband's untimely and tragic death may further draw attention to the linguistic disparity. Violet names Ram/Ravan a "murderer" as she accuses him of being the reason behind her husband's death, unable to convert her words into a language that the baby's mother might comprehend (6). Khair admits that some English-speaking Indian writers have written about characters from both rural and lower caste backgrounds; however, he contends that Indian novels written in English have

adhered to conventional societal structure patterns and that marginalised characters from contemporary society are also marginalised in the text.

Nagarkar makes a special effort in *Ravan and Eddie* to highlight the class violence connected to Hinduism, despite the fact that caste-based persecution is a common theme in many Indian Anglophone literature. He undoubtedly succumbs to Khair's charge that all lower-caste people are shown from upper-class - or, maybe more appropriately, lower middle-class - perspectives in his portrayal of the "untouchable," Shahaji Kadam. However, the fact that Ravan is a child as well and is unaware of the politics surrounding untouchables clouds this image. Instead of being terrified, Ravan is shocked to learn about Shahaji's relationship with Tara Sarang. "What was she doing with that man anyway?" he wonders. Did she not realise that neither the Hindus nor the Catholics had any conversations with the residents of Chawl Nos. 7, 11, 22, 23, and 29 on the ground floor? Nothing about it was prohibited; you just didn't do it." (56)

Members of other castes avoid untouchables directly because such contacts are prohibited, as seen by Ravan's bewilderment regarding untouchables, which betrays his near-complete ignorance of class difference. Rather of understanding the reasoning behind such exclusion, Ravan has been indoctrinated to see discrimination as standard conduct. After examining the mindset underlying the untouchables' estrangement, Ravan is unable to derive a coherent explanation, and his behaviour becomes malleable.

Ravan participates in the star-crossed couple's courtship almost immediately by delivering letters between them. Ravan even makes the extra effort to touch Shahaji, wrapping his arms around his waist on the back of a motorbike, in a bold challenge to the social norm. When Tara's father finds out about the affair, he beats his daughter so severely that she miscarries their child, bringing an end to Tara's relationship with Shahaji. Despite the possibility that this is a linguistic affirmation of Shahaji's estrangement, the part really asks which character is the most human. Shahaji is shown as a real guy, flawed but unquestionably human, whereas Mr. Sarang is shown to be a terrible figure who beats his devoted daughters at almost any provocation.

The method in which Nagarkar approaches class difference is a departure from the classic Anglo-Indian book, but his suggestion that marginalised Indians might use English to elevate their social status subverts the idea that English is a language of privilege altogether. This is especially clear in his aside in *Ravan and Eddie* titled "A Meditation on Neighbours." He claims that the CWD chawls contain:

Hindus spoke Marathi, Catholics, English.... English was the thorn in the side of the Hindus. Its absence was their cross, their humiliation and the source of their life-long inferiority and inadequacy. It was a severely debilitating, if not fatal, lack that was not acknowledged, spoken of or articulated. It was the great leveler. It gave caste-Hindus a taste of their own medicine. It made them feel like untouchables. It also turned the tables. The former outcastes could now look down upon their Hindu neighbours. (168)

It's a fortunate invention that Nagarkar spelt "outcastes" in this instance. According to him, individuals who failed to have an impact on the Hindu community were able to pursue power in another way, this time by picking up the language of the colonisers. Nagarkar goes on to say that this is only an extension of the thousands of years-old Indian customs. In the end, he contends, the word "Sanskrit" was traditionally used to denote culture and tradition, and people who couldn't communicate in Sanskrit were essentially shut out of cultural activities. The alienation of those who are unable to communicate in the appropriate language is not a recent development, nor is it just the result of British colonization.

Nagarkar grasps society answerable for its obvious ignore for issues such as poverty, development, caste, religion, as well as discrimination. His points of vision are honest in their appearance of realism. *Ravan and Eddie* are humorous, other than it is as well sensible and informative concerning human survival in the middle of every day move violently. This novel portrays the lives of families on after the lower middle as well as lower classes. It tells the stories of families by means of over a dozen associate living in two rooms, distribution an ordinary toilet at the ending of the corridor, and drawing water for drinking as well as bathing from a community tap. *Ravan and Eddie* portray chawl life in Bombay as well as its multi-cultural society. At the same time, it portrays a youngster's attraction in Hindi films. This novel is humorous, other than it as well depicts human survival between daily hardships in a sensible as well as enlightening method. The lives of lower middle class and lower-class family are representing in this novel.

Ravan and Eddie symbolize the actual fact of the lives of the Mumbai city. Kiran Nagarkar investigates the suffering as well as bewilderment of his character. His major personality Ravan struggles to find out who he actually puts up by means of the tapering force of nervousness in addition to gets wedged up in it infrequently. Through humor, satire, as well as bleak other than fervent humour. Kiran Nagarkar portrays their disastrous state. He highlights the demanding condition so as to modern man countenance when effort to live in a multicultural culture. This novel represents the lives of two boys. Eddie Coutinho is a Christian, catholic, as well as Ravan Pawar is a Maratha, Hindu boy.

Kiran Nagarkar detains the spirit of Mumbai life as well as culture, with multi-cultural and multi-lingual facets. People's lives are complicated as an answer of the poverty in the chawls. He elucidates Mumbai's communications in deepness. Nowadays, it appears so as to Mumbai's buildings are factually attainment the sky. We find out constructing rivalry. Troubles by means of basic services together with water, physical condition, education, employment, cleanliness, as well as clean surroundings obtain worse as population density rises. The reader is complete conscious of the human race's tremendous require as well as be short of resources in the novel's succeeding lines, "Water and blood. Is there a distinction? The water battles had begun. The women of the CWD chawls had taken a while to comprehend the need of water" (R&E 72). The appearance of multilingual feature has improved the probability of language synthesis in Mumbai. It talks about the amalgamation of a variety of languages, including Marathi, Hindi, Parsi, Gujarati, as well as Kokni.

India is a developing country. The percentage of the population living lower the poverty line is higher in the country. Such a proportion can be established in a metropolis similar to Mumbai. In spite of the country's progression in science plus technology, the fundamental wants of the people are not met owing to scarcity. Religion is the foundation of Indian society. It is the basis of the political disturbance. The writer complicated on the subject based on faith. He portrays the opposite forces of spiritual statement of belief.

Kiran Nagarkar's *The Extra* is the continuation to *Ravan and Eddie*. This novel is a social explanation on top of Mumbai and its social realism. The usual procedure of the life of lower middle class as well as lower class people who move violently to create a living in a full of activity city similar to Mumbai is the focus of the novel. The writer is once more able to carry out a complete depiction of the social reality that encompasses human beings in a place, which is congested. Ongoing the life story of the two boy's Ravan as well as Eddie, the novel extrapolates their lives plus their way of life, which are intensely prejudiced through their surroundings. The writer fling light on the concealed lives of Mumbai people who are frequently pressed keen on the darker side of the city. Nagarkar's vision on culture as well as human beings is an ideal depiction of genuine position of the society in this contemporary era.

From olden times to the current, poverty has not been totally eradicated from society. On behalf of their everyday food, people who have suffered as well as toilet carry on to do so. In the innermost works department chawls of Bombay, where their lives ran similar, the two boy's lives, Marathi Hindu Ravan Pawar as well as Goan Christian Eddie Coutinho, are chronicled in the novel *Ravan and Eddie*. This story follows the antics of the two titular male protagonists, *Ravan and Eddie*, whose "subjectivity and identity" are shaped by their various spiritual outlooks as well as principles The bleak world of CWD chawls is viewed from side to side the eyes of the youthful anti-heroes, who grope and hesitate next to each stage of their lives other than never permit debacle otherwise setbacks to moisten their strength way the pursuit of their thoughts toward become Bollywood famous person.

The inflexible division of the dissimilar floors of the chawls in conditions of their communal individuality as well as spiritual association is so painfully understandable so as to it separated the Hindu and the Christian communities keen on two disjunctions as well as secluded worlds stranded in space and moment. As Kiran Nagarkar states, "it was... religion that was the source of all the differences between the two communities" (R&E 172). The novelist, whereas sympathetically paradoxically very funny, representation the social as well as cultural gaucheries of members of the two groups as well as their obvious as well as entirety thoughtlessness in the direction of one another's emotion and manner of life

The writer offers us thought-provoking to the side as well as arbitration on a diversity of theme all through the book, counting the significance, importance, as well as authority of the English language in postcolonial, post-independent India and its part in pressure people's lives, the part of the touching representation as well as cinema in contemporary society, the lasting subject of water scarcity, mainly for the disadvantaged as well as reasonably underprivileged communities in contemporary cities, as well as the history of the English language. The life in a chawl is not at all a substance of arrogance otherwise festivity. Its heterogeneity does not

make known 'unity in diversity'. Rather separated through their class, caste, race otherwise sexual category the cultural world of the chawl counteracts some likelihood of homogenous individuality of the people living in it.

CONCLUSION

Ravan and Eddie represent the actuality of life in Mumbai. People who live in chawls. Chawls in Mumbai are the multi-story buildings by means of general facilities built in the 19th century through the cotton-mill proprietor for the mill workers. Girangaon was an exact area in Mumbai where these chawls were soaked originally, because the majority of the mills were in Girangaon. Dozens of relations members share an ordinary toilet as well as bathroom, drink water from a public tap, and have no solitude. Families by means of low incomes such as drivers, conductors, lower division clerks, as well as peons live in the chawls. In *Ravan and Eddie*, Kiran Nagarkar skillfully captures the psychological evolution of the two main characters, Eddie and Ravan, as well as how they change in response to their sociocultural surroundings. The fundamental theme of the book is the animosity, enmity, and tensions that exist between the two religious' groups, the Hindus and the Catholics. The life tales of two lads have been humorously and satirically depicted by the author in parallel lines. The tragedy of urban life, with its communalism, inequities, and confined divides, as well as other situations and factors that contribute to the deterioration and loss of human concerns, is also shown in the book. It provides a peek of the Chawl people' fight for existence as well as their poverty, violence against classes, and caste system. In essence, the narrative is mostly about the working-class people's battle for existence.

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