



Nation, Cricket, and Identity: Sunil Gavaskar's impact and Influence on the Indian Cricket Team.

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Abstract:

It is an admitted fact that Indian Cricketers find a heart in the millions of the people partly because people celebrated them as 'semi god'. Cricket is a religion to them. In those days, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp were unknown to the people. Cricket was less commercialized. Though cricket is considered as a product of the British, it is able to arrest the attention of the people. In the galaxy of Indian cricketers, Sunil Gavaskar stands head and shoulder above all the Indian cricketers because of his passion for cricket. Moreover, is arguably the topnotch Indian cricketer who breaks the record of Australian legend's Don Bradman's Longstanding record of 29 centuries. Its icing on the cake that he is actually a gifted batsman. His father is an Indian batsman whereas her mother admires the sports very much. But he developed a special interest in cricket right from his childhood. He wants to prove his innate talent as cricketer. He remains a role model for Sachin Tendulkar partly because of his genuine interest in the domain of Cricket. He meticulously unveils some interesting and innovative insights about his cricketing career, his passion for cricket and his achievement in his autobiography "Sunny Days".

Key words: cricket, religion, commercialized, childhood, insights.

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I. Introduction

Autobiography is, in a way, a form of literature. It is a story of an individual written by himself. It concentrates on the growth of the authors personality and mind. It carefully constructs self with the help of memory. It simply signifies their journey. Autobiography is not a passive documentation of facts but a performative act of self-construction and self-discovery. Interestingly enough, the autobiographer assumes the dual role of narrator and protagonist, reconstructing a life through the lens of the present. Autobiographical works are, by nature, subjective. Autobiographies are many. Spiritual autobiography. Political autobiography, women autobiography, sports autobiography. Each autobiography has its own significance. Since time immemorial, sports have been a perennial source of inspiration for mankind. Michel Foucault in his thought-provoking essay, "Technology of the Self" (1982) examines how individuals shape themselves through specific practises-such as confession, meditation, wisdom, happiness or purity. He holds a veritable view that technologies of the self are a kind of technology that allows individuals to affect operations on their own bodies, souls, thoughts and transform themselves.

Sports Autobiography

Sports is a part and parcel of life. It is something that reflects culture. It has become an important aspect of life. It connotes different things to different people. Sports autobiography is diametrically different from autobiography. While it is true that autobiography is about the world of an individual, sports biography throws a modicum amount of light on the notion of sport and sportsmen. Interestingly enough, heroism, team spirit, a sense of belonging, a sense of pride, accomplishment, the conflict between player and the coach, the binary between success and failure, triumph, commerce, resilience, self confidence, winning culture, celebrity culture, disappointment and a sense of fear are of paramount importance in the domain of sports literature. Sports literature is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry. Speaking technically, it is a body of writing that presents the interplay between sports and literature. A large number of writers take delight in pointing out the inner meaning of life in good standing with the realm of sport. It is usually written in the form of autobiographies, biographies, memoirs, diaries, and letters. Each form has its own significance. Sports literature is actually a form of writing that encompasses the following narratives such as

- a) Cricket narrative,
- b) baseball narrative,
- c) Athlete
- d) Swimming
- e) football narrative,
- f) rugby narrative
- g) hockey narrative
- h) boxing.

Each narrative has its own significance. It represents the culture too. The significance of sports literature lies in its ability to convey the values of life through the lens of sports. Sports literature is the focus of attention in the present scenario. Sports person is the main hero of this kind of writing. It tells us how sports are represented in the domain of literature. It has been a common motif in literature. It analyses team spirit, discipline, obedience, cooperation, determination and co-ordination. It conveys the fact that games should not be played only for monetary benefit but also for the simple pleasure of playing. The evolution of sport is a journey from direct survival actions—“savage necessities” to virtual-based entertainment. Sport transforms the raw, violent needs of humanity into ritualized entertainment. From hunting to video-games, sports have undergone a complete transformation. People spend a significant amount of their time on sports which have gradually commercialized for various reasons.

With the Industrial Revolution, Sports became a source of entertainment for the masses rather than just the elites. Sports activities create an atmosphere in which friendship can be more easily forged. Sports also help in the enhancement of an individual's character. It provides entertainment and generates a feeling of excitement. The ghost writers play a keen role in the present literary scenario. These days, ghost writers not only write biographies but also write autobiographies with the help of publishers for their commercial profit. Consequently, the autobiographies of cricketers, film actors and actresses, and politicians have been coming out..

In most of these autobiographies, the authors depict their academic or educational lives with all their struggles, delights, problems, and challenges, involving their connections with the greater society around them. Autobiography is the art of writing about oneself. The primary purpose of writing is often to show the epic struggle of a writer. Writing an autobiography is a deceptively simple act which is not practised by anyone and everyone. It requires some knowledge of literature and the art of writing in addition to possessing a fine literary sensibility. A mere abundance of life experience is not enough to create an autobiography but it has to be transformed into a form of readable life narrative. It is interesting to note that while many people—such as merchants, stage actors, labourers, and politicians—have diverse, profound life experiences, they are often unable to convert these private moments into artistic expression.. That is why, sometimes they hire the well-paid ghost writers to articulate their lived experiences of life. Celebrity autobiographies are now frequently crafted by ghost writers. They write at an early stage in the author's life. In professions such as the sport and entertainment industry, where careers may be relatively brief, the standpoint from which past and present are observed often lies not towards the end of life, but at the time of its flourishing..

Cricket is an identity of India. It means not only the game of the bat and ball, but also a code of conduct, the essence of sportsmanship. It is, in fact, synonymous with fair play in all walks of life. Cricket is a globally popular outdoor bat-and-ball sport which involves hand-eye coordination. As a thumb rule, it is played between two teams of eleven players. It involves batting, bowling, fielding, and obeying the instructions of the umpire. Although it originated in the sixteenth century, it became popular in the eighteenth century due to the arrival of television. With the arrival of television, it was able to influence young minds.

Mukul Kesavan in his book, "Men in White: A Book of Cricket," says

Cricket is made for television in a way that to other team game is (with the possible exception of American football). There are many reasons for this, but the most basic one is that thanks to the zoom lens and the close-up, you can see the game better on television than you can in the stadium. (28)

Sunil Gavaskar, at his infant stage, was very much attached to his parents. Gavaskar's father played a remarkable role in his son's life right from his childhood till the age of thirty-six, as they lived together in the same house at Dadar in Bombay, and he gave him the much-needed guidance. Even in childhood, while playing street cricket, he was successful, and his friends in the community found it very difficult to make him 'out'. He wants to prove his innate talent as cricketer. When Gavaskar started playing street cricket at elementary school level, people used to point out that there was something extraordinary in him. Sunil Gavaskar's parents encouraged him by providing him necessary equipments. His mother stitched special sized pads even at childhood. Being a club cricketer himself, Sunil's father used to take his son to the playground whenever he was playing. His mother played with him in the verandah at home.

Sunil Gavaskar was born on 10.7.1949 at Parvandare's Hospital, Sea Face in Bombay. When Narayan Masureker, one of his relatives, visited the hospital to see baby Gavaskar on the baby's first day, he noticed a little hole near the top of his left earlobe. The next day when he came again and picked up the baby, to his utter horror, he discovered that the baby did not have the hole on the ear lobe. When a frantic search of all the cribs in the hospital was made, the baby was eventually located sleeping blissfully beside a fisherwoman, totally oblivious of the commotion he had caused. The mix-up had taken place after the babies had been given their bath. If the small hole near the top of the earlobe had not been noticed, perhaps Gavaskar would have grown up to be a fisherman.

As the first child in the family on both sides after a long time, Sunil Gavaskar was the apple of everyone's eye at home. He was admitted to Canara Saraswati Association Montessori School, Tardeo, Bombay. He was a very good and active student, taking part in all types of extra-curricular activities, such as small plays, mimicry, and singing. During his childhood, cricket was the most common game. Sunil's style of playing compound-wall cricket attracted many senior cricketers, who collectively felt he showed enough promise to sit in the hearts of the people someday. Since his mother was deeply interested in cricket, she decided to encourage him and was solely responsible for his skyrocketing growth. When he was a small boy, she would play with him when no one else was around. She used to bowl to him in the small gallery of his house, where they played their daily match with a tennis ball. It is because of his sense of commitment and passion for cricket that he achieved his remarkable feat in the domain of cricket.

Sunil Gavaskar, nicknamed the 'Little Master,' revolutionized cricket in the 1970s and 80s as the first player to surpass ten thousand Test runs, setting the benchmark for technical mastery and opening batting. He has the distinction of being the first batting legend, bringing self-belief to his generation, cementing India's standing against dominating fast-bowling nations, and winning the 1985 World Championship of Cricket as captain.

II. Review of literature

Sheikh Salman Murtazai in his research article titled "Indian Cricket and Fear: A Study of the Movie 83 and the Autobiographies of Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar" analyzed the different factors leading to fear in the Indian Cricket by a close reading of the above-mentioned texts and the movie in a comparative manner.

III. Findings and Discussions

Sunil Gavaskar is a disciplined Player. He is a polished social aware, emotionally detached and disciplined artful, aesthetically fastidious, insightful regarding self and others. He offers constructive group solutions. He is sharp and flexible. As he scores high runs, he is shrewd and much careful in planning things. He gets motivated for doing things from within intrinsically. He has the ability to see and understand things quickly and clearly. He is well behaved and well mannered. He is able to win the admiration and appreciation of the people partly because of his and possess intellectual firepower. It is interesting to note that he impressed everyone by his discipline. Being known as 'little master in the world of cricket, he is a stylist and accomplished batsmen.

IV. Conclusion.

In fine, Sunil Gavaskar records his experience as an Indian cricketer. He just describes his growth from a cricket-obsessed Mumbai boy to a world-class opener, highlighting his formative years, dedication to mastering technique, and a sensational 1971 debut series in the West Indies. He meticulously details his cricketing journey through school, collegiate and Ranji Trophy cricket, overcoming early struggles and establishing himself as a disciplined, mentally strong batter. His autobiography is noted for its simple, direct, language and for offering a rare, intimate look at the "Little Master". It also remains a significant piece of cricket literature, showcasing the mindset of one of the game's greatest opening batsmen during his formative years. The important thing about Sunny Days is that Gavaskar wrote every word without the guidance of ghostwriters. It was praised for its simple language and sincerity, acting as a direct, firsthand record of a legendary sportsman's journey.

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