



UPAMANYU CHATTERJEE'S ENGLISH AUGUST AND THE MAMMARIES OF THE WELFARE STATE AS A SATIRE WITH THE THEMES OF POLITICS AND IGNORANT YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with two of the novels of Upamanyu Chatterjee i.e., English August, his first novel and its sequence, his third novel entitled The Mammaries of the Welfare State. Both these novels have been closely interlinked and the novelist has justified both of them really beautifully. If we can understand the first novel totally, the other one will be really easy and understandable for us. The character of Agastya is also important and it has changed into a good person in the second novel unlike the first one where he has been shown as disinterested, and ignorant youth. The major theme here is the youth, politics and the ignorant behaviour of the young people. The novelist has been successful in his approach towards the youth in this novel. Both these novels are comic and at the same time they are the satire they the people enjoy as well as understand.

Key words: Youth, Politics, Sex, Society, Agastya, Western culture, August, India, Ignorant.

INTRODUCTION

The novels of Upamanyu Chatterjee have been regarded as the mirror of the society as they depict the real situations of the current contemporary society where one has to be a responsible person in terms of everything. His novels have a variety of themes like sex, marriage, family life, extra marriage relationship, corruption, child abuse inequality in terms of sex and gender, love etc. His novels have been recognised in India as well as abroad and people of great excellence have admired these works because the themes are universal. This novel presents the society with all its negativity, conflicts, depressions, frustrations and the

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different kinds of attitudes of males and females and the ignorant youngsters of our society as they often feel themselves desolated and in despair. It is a real surprise that we do not find Science and Technology in his novels because he doesn't seem to have used the mobile phone or other electronic equipment for communication himself. The major quality of Chatterjee as a novelist is his flow of thoughts, he is way of delivering and the spontaneity by which he can go inside the mind of the readers. His works are just like the touch tone by which we can understand the bigger problems of the society and can also try to solve them with the help of this beautiful works. Indeed, these works have proved to be the stepping stones as far as social ladders are concerned.

The first novel of Chatterjee entitled *English August* an Indian story has been published in the year 1988 where he has discussed the realistic situation of India through the character of Agastya Sen who happens to be the Indian Civil Servant and has been really attracted by the lifestyles of the Western people and western culture. Despite of the fact that he is an IAS his mind has been involved in the thoughts of the females, sex, literature and drugs all the time. The entire novel has been devoted to the essence of family life and other issues that have been fixed around the westernized approach of the upper middle-class youngster. The youth is the one who has been attracted to the Western culture and the lifestyle because it finds it really interesting and lavishing. The main character of the novel has been called by his other childhood friends as August because he has been interested in English language and the lavishing lifestyle from the very beginning. However, his life has been changed when he suddenly length in Madna which has been considered as the hottest reason in all over India. So, he has been away from his urban style of living and that is the reason why he finds it boring and gradually he gets frustrated by what he was doing. He is a young man and therefore he like sex but here he doesn't get any one with whom he can do it so he gets into the masturbation whenever he finds himself alone. It is to be noted that he has become an IAS not because he has been passionate for has been interested in money but he has been into it by the chance only. He has been a lonely fellow and a youth who has been disinterested in everything but only in sex. Life has changed a little bit when he come across two people, a pair of a father and a son, who have been running a charity institution. So, this novel has so many things like youth and the other aspect of the society where the youth needs to take participate in order to make some changes in the society but the youth like Agastya has been the major problem of our society because they are doing nothing except roaming and access involving in sex and other rackets. So, the novelist has been successful in his approach towards the youth in this novel.

Chatterjee has written the sequence of *English August* with the title named *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* which happens to be his third novel, published in the year 2000. This novel is also very much famous as it is the satire on the popular culture and because of its political approach which makes it even more acceptable novel all through the nation. It also reveals

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the darker side of the Indian bureaucracy the same time it has been well received as a dark comedy. Because of his background he is able to give full justice to this kind of theme. Here he has a chance to expose this culture and the political system of India which has been not that much sound. This novel is a real satire as it truly represents the society at large and other societal elements in it which make it difficult for the youth to go in right direction. This novel is an extension of the novel English August. Again, the protagonist is Agastya or August but now he has become mature and is a changed person than that of the previous novel. He has been helping people ever since the change he goes through and he also tries to make change in the corrupt and violated society. Among the many themes of the novel are the child abuse, politics, corruption and the social service which have been developed pretty well by the novelist. Other aspects like belief in Babas, superstitions and the lack of honesty have been discussed as well. The title is really suggestive as it shows that the state is compared to that of the goats and the other Mammaries which has been the symbols of the Indian political system and the politicians who have been involved in the corruption. These are the interesting symbols but the reader should get the idea of them prior to the reading otherwise it would be difficult for them to understand.

Thus, both these novels have been closely interlinked and the novelist has justified both of them really beautifully. If we can understand the first novel totally, the other one will be really easy and understandable for us. The character of Agastya is also important and it has changed into a good person in the second novel unlike the first one where he has been shown as disinterested, and ignorant youth.

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