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### Cricket and Colonialism: From *Swami and Friends* to *Lagaan*

*Play up, play up and play the game—"Vitae Lampada"*

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Out of India last year came an academy award nominated film, *Lagaan* (2001), on a theme long embedded in the Indian consciousness: beating the colonizers at their own game, cricket. This film harks back to R.K. Narayan's classic novel *Swami and Friends* (1935). Narayan is probably among the first of the colonials to explore how cricket had become a trope for nationalism. Young Swami, the hero of the narrative, is steeped in cricket and cricket lore. But he is also pulled towards his Indianness and his Indian nationalism, so that an impending cricket match between the students of the Mission school, the team for which he is playing, against his own "Board" school colleagues becomes much more than just a game. Pulled as he is between his westernized friend, Rajam, the son of the District Superintendent of Police of the British Raj, and his more Indianized neighborhood friends, Swami unfortunately runs away from that cricket match. Unlike in *Lagaan*, the showdown occurs without Swami the hero. While Swami is off lost in the forest in this private meditative rumination, he discovers that his real Indianness means more to him than all the cricket in the world. He longs for his Indian food and his Indian grandmother's loving arms which are a shelter from

the feelings of inferiority which have led him to run away from the game.

It is often said that Narayan's writing is not in any way political and that reading politics into his work is reading too much into it. Narayan criticism has burgeoned from William Walsh's now-classic essay, "Sweet Mangoes and Malt Vinegar," to Michael Gorra's lengthy piece, "R. K. Narayan Remembered," in the *Times Literary Supplement* published upon Narayan's death in 2001 at the age of 94. So long ago, William Walsh praised Narayan for creating a "human idiom" in his book with the same title, through which cricket games and cricket bat catalogues were made "as Indian and real to the bicultural situation as grandmother, the monkey and mango chutney" (Jussawalla, "R. K. Narayan 1968"). Critics have often failed to see Narayan as political because of his Austenian focus on his "two-inch bit of ivory," which is Malgudi. Uma Parmeswaran dismissed Narayan's work as a "one-stringed instrument fashioned out of bamboo and coconut shells" (57). But the respect that early commonwealth literary critics such as C. D. Narasimhaiah and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar had for Narayan has returned. Reed Way Dasenbrock, in his essay "Meaningfulness and Intelligibility in Multicultural Literature in English," shows how paying careful attention to the contexts of Narayan's work such as *The Painter of Signs* helps glean deeper meanings from what may seem to be a simpler and more superficial work. Even V. S. Naipaul has admitted the depth of Narayan's work and has actually put this debate about Naipaul's simplicity in a political context:

Because we take to novels our own ideas of what we feel they must offer, we often find in unusual or original work, only what we expect to find, and we reject or miss what we aren't looking for. But it astonished me that twenty years before, not having been to India, taking to *Mr. Sampath* only my knowledge of the Indian community of Trinidad and my reading of other literature, I should have missed or misread so much, should have seen only a comedy of small-town life and

a picaresque, wandering narrative in a book that was really so mysterious. . . —reading during the Emergency . . . I saw in *Mr. Sampath* a foreshadowing of the tensions that had come to India. . . . What had seemed speculative and comic, aimless and “Russian” about Narayan’s novel had turned out to be something else, the expression of an almost hermetic philosophical system. (19)

Recent studies of Narayan have ranged from considering his work in a purely literary framework to considering it in the tradition of political postcolonial writing. Two such recent and important studies of Narayan are Geoffrey Kain’s anthology, *R. K. Narayan: Contemporary Critical Perspectives* and Fawzia Afzal-Khan’s *Cultural Imperialism*. Newer works range from Oscar and Lilian Handlin’s *From the Outer World* to Tabish Kabir’s *Babu Fictions: Alienation in Contemporary Indian English Novels*. At least half a dozen new books have been published in India on Narayan in the late 1990s, but none of the scholars looks at the importance of British institutions in Narayan’s work and at how a British institution such as cricket is juxtaposed with the Indian context to express nationalism. Similarly, Amir Khan’s film *Lagaan* juxtaposes the British institution of cricket with the Indian game *gilli-danda*, which is as pervasive in Indian villages as cricket was in Britain’s.

The cricket match in *Swami and Friends* is a device that demonstrates Narayan’s nationalism.<sup>1</sup> If we can assume in these days of the “death of the author” that Narayan’s sympathies lay with Swami, or even that Swami expressed Narayan’s own point of view, then we can assume that Narayan created Swami to be the binary opposite of Rajam, the Indian British Police Superintendent’s son, who upholds all things British. Swami is taken in by the exotic appearance of the elitism of cricket. When it gets down to participating in an actual game, he is ashamed of participating in the colonial enterprise and not of being Indian or inferior. Therefore, Swami’s getting lost on the Grand Trunk Road, Kipling’s great colonial metaphoric device for representing India, is in fact Swami’s

turning inwards to his Indian self. In Swami’s *bildungsroman*, this “being lost” is the great moment of his self-awareness as Indian. The hero’s coming to an awareness of himself as belonging to a specific nation is an important component in Martin Swales’s definition of the *bildungsroman*. In *Signs Taken for Wonders*, Franco Moretti feels that the hero of a *bildungsroman* comes to his moment of awareness when he feels integrated with his context and “finds his peace there” (231). It is precisely when he feels integrated into his Indian family and gives up trying to be British that Swami finds peace. Swami and Narayan both affirm Indianness. Contrarily, in *Lagaan*, the cricket match is also a device that affirms nationalism, not by turning one’s back on it, but by excelling at it and beating the colonizer, albeit in a makeshift Indian way.

Thus, metaphorically, a cricket victory in the colonies was more than just a sports victory. It was victory over the colonizer. It was showing the colonizers that the colonized were better at their own game. Both in *Swami and Friends* and in *Lagaan*, the colonials show that they can learn this supposed arch-Britishism and master it. This in itself embodied the triumph over the colonizer, since the colonizers seemed to think that cricket exhibited *their* special prowess, *their* special talents and *their* racial superiority. Cricket in the colonial’s mind was not “colonial mimicry,” but a competition to display their own prowess. Homi Bhabha defines “colonial mimicry” as being “almost the same but not quite” or “almost the same but not white” (89):

Mimicry is thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the Other as it visualizes power. Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance and poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized’ knowledges and disciplinary powers. (86)

The playing and winning at cricket by the colonials was not simply the playing of a game. Nor was it simply about appropriating the power of the Other. Instead, it seemed to have been the effort to outdo the other and to assert equality. Swami's recalcitrance to play the game is a subconscious recalcitrance, not a deliberate one and as such not one that "coheres" colonial power. In *Lagaan*, the game is a revolt, not even a nonviolent passive resistance. It is one man's, Bhuvan's, absolute resistance to colonial power, a defiant, "I'll show you," which he is able to solidify by gaining support from the more recalcitrant villagers. Therefore, unlike what Homi Bhabha quotes from Benedict Anderson, at least in these two instances cricket is not a colonial mimicry which reflects "the inner compatibility of empire and nation" (Bhabha 87). What Anderson means here is that the compatibility of empire and nation makes mimicry on the part of the colonial facile. However, Narayan's *Swami and Friends* shows how difficult it is for the truly Indian person like Swami to carry out the mimicry. It is against his nature as it were. The entire film of *Lagaan* shows how difficult and perplexing the notions of cricket are to the Indian mind. Despite the difficulty, the Indian villagers emerge triumphant. To say that colonial mimicry can arise out of the compatibility of empire and nation does not problematize racial and cultural priority. Winning at cricket entails not only the seizing of power but of showing how silly and immature the colonizers' pride is when vested in their "supposed" cricket prowess. In this, lies the nationalism of cricket as shown both in *Swami* and in *Lagaan*.

In his essay on C. L. R. James's *Beyond a Boundary*, Naipaul says that "Cricket is no longer a substitute for nationalism" (*The Picador Book of Cricket* 436), implying that for the longest time the colonials' endeavor of beating the British at cricket was indeed a nationalist enterprise. In fact, this impetus lay behind the great espousing of cricket by the colonials and then even the postcolonials. In the years that I was growing up, the great age of the Nawab of

Pataudi (the poster boy for all teenage Indian girls at the time), Polly Umrigar, Engineer, Jaisimha and Imran Khan of Pakistan, I recall the cricket frenzy that had swept the nation, particularly if the Marylebone Cricket Club, mistakenly known in India as the Manchester Cricket Club or mostly simply known as the M.C.C., were coming out to play. It was similarly heated if India was playing Pakistan. In both instances, it was veritably a war. Day after day we would skip out of Nizam College to the Fateh Maidan to cheer on the troops as it were. I was saddened to read Ramachandra Guha's "Introduction" to *The Picador Book of Cricket*, where he talks about how live television has changed cricket's reception. Guha writes, "When one has just watched England play Australia on the box, or at any rate is preparing to watch England play South Africa on the morrow... why bother" (iii). I remember India being all shut down on the days of major cricket matches, just as London was shut down in 2002 while England played in the World Cup. Beckham will never be as great in soccer fans' eyes as Bradman was for his cricket fans. One heard about him as the great man almost fifty years later! Even Narayan recalls him when Swami says, "He bats like Bradman" (152). While Narayan was writing in colonial times, the India I recall is postcolonial India. We colonials and postcolonials were steeped in cricket. Some of us were introduced to it in school and others in literature. All knew it as the game that supposedly reflected English character—stoicism, stiff upper lips—and above all fairness and impartiality. In his cricket memoir, *Beyond a Boundary*, C. L. R. James writes about how everyone came together to play cricket:

We were a motley crew. The children of some white officials and white business men, middle class black mulattos, Chinese boys, some whose parents still spoke broken English, Indian boys, some whose parents could speak no English at all. (25)

To this James adds, "Cricket had plunged me into politics long before I was aware of it" (65). He expands on this as follows:

I haven't the slightest doubt that the clash of race, caste and class did not retard but stimulated West Indian cricket. I am equally certain that in those years social and political passions, denied normal outlets, expressed themselves so fiercely in cricket. . . precisely because they were games. Here began my personal calvary. . . . Thus the cricket field was a stage on which selected individuals played representative roles which were charged with social significance. (67)

Here we are far beyond mimicry. It isn't the black man trying to put on a white mask. It was, as James tells us, about a *war*—"a war between English puritanism, English Literature and cricket, and the realism of West Indian life" (20). This *war* we see played out both in *Swami and Friends* and in *Lagaan*. They both show how cricket became a nationalist enterprise.

Perhaps this was partly because the British saw themselves as inherently superior to the colonials because they could play this "civilized" game with all its attendant heraldry of starched whites, cucumber sandwiches and B.B.C. broadcasts. Cricket was brought to Britain's colonies far and wide—from India, to Nigeria, to Trinidad—first by the British traders and missionaries and from there on by the colonizers. For the colonizers it became a symbol of power. While they played among themselves at the clubs and the cantonments, they were not loathe to play the "natives" to show off their superiority and prowess. Young Indian, Caribbean and other postcolonial writers have long written about this love-hate tension between the colonizer and the colonized. It was, as the movie *Lagaan* shows, war. If ever there were a trope for nationalism, it was cricket. Cricket was the condition to aspire for, as Narayan showed us so aptly in *Swami and Friends*, written in 1935. Beating the colonizer at cricket was more important than independence. Independence simply meant throwing out the colonizer.

Winning at cricket meant showing that the black/brown man could be as intelligent, as "cultured," as superior in the human chain as the "white" man. It meant being more "British" than the British. As Fanon has aptly put it, "The former slave needs a challenge to his humanity" (221). When "the former slave," through the challenge to his humanity, is able to do something better than the master, he achieves "magic" as it were. Fanon writes:

The white man has never understood this magic substitution. The white man wants the world; he wants it for himself alone. He finds himself predestined master of the world. He enslaves it. An acquisitive relation is established between the world and him. But there exist other values that fit only my forms. Like a magician, I robbed the white man of a "certain world," forever after lost to him and his. (127-128)

This is what the game of cricket symbolizes in the movie *Lagaan*—the robbing of the *certain* world of the "white man," Captain Andrew Russell, by the "illiterate, uncivilized" farmer Bhuvan, who had dared to call this "great game" a "silly" game. That cricket, the "certain world" of the British, is described for us again by C.L.R. James in his treatise on cricket called *Beyond a Boundary*:

cricket was one of the most complete products of the previous age.... The Victorians made it compulsory for their children and all the evidence points to the fact that they valued competence in it and respect for what it came to signify more than they did intellectual accomplishment of any kind. The only word I know for this is *culture* the proof of its validity is its success, first of all at home and then almost rapidly abroad, in the most diverse places and among the peoples living lives which were poles removed from whence it originally came. This signifies as so often in any deeply national movement, that it contained elements of universality that went beyond the bounds of the originating nation. (166)

"Culture," that is what cricket symbolized—English culture, quintessential Englishness. Writing today on the problems of Muslims in Britain, Hanif Kureishi sheds the

same sort of light on culture and its opposition, as Fanon and James did not too long ago. He writes:

The word is "culture." It is a word often used by the New Right, who frequently cite T.S. Eliot: that culture is a whole way of life, manifesting itself in the individual, in the group—and in the society. . . . For Eliot culture includes all the characteristic activities of the people: Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the Twelfth of August. (168-169)

Similarly, cricket was (I say *was* because soccer—or football, as James calls it, seems to have outpaced cricket) synonymous with English culture. But it was associated with upper-class gentlemanliness and that is probably why it is now being replaced by soccer today. Soccer, though much more plebian, embodies the same qualities of the supremacy of athletes—the necessary athletic ability supposedly needed to build a great mind. Cecil Rhodes, namesake of the great cricketer Wilfred Rhodes, saw the necessity of athletic ability in endowing the Rhodes scholarship requiring scholars to excel in athletics and scholarship.

In his opening to *The Picador Book of Cricket*, Alan Gibson comments on the necessity of athletic contests with his speculation about what may have been the first touring cricket team: "The first English sporting team to tour abroad (or so I imagine) left our shores in 1586, under the captaincy of John Davis. Its destination was the Arctic Circle, where it took part in a series of athletic contests against the Eskimo" (3). The eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1910, however, tells us that cricket was first played in the year 1300, under Edward I ("Cricket" 435). Then it was considered an inferior game to archery and meant only for "the lower orders." Judging from the drawings of the game, it consisted of bowling, batting and fielding. The word "cricket" occurs about the year 1550: "to make a noise as a cricket, to play cricket-at-wicket and to be merry" (436). From then on cricket was woven into the fabric of English life, gaining ascendancy when played in the Pall Mall, in London, in 1755 and the founding of the "laws" of cricket by

the M.C.C. in 1788. From here on cricket became a metaphor for English life and English fairness: "It isn't cricket" meant something was not fair or above board. Professionalism increased and something called first-class cricket replaced "cricket on the village green" (441). Then there came Lords: the game between the Gentlemen versus the Players, the upper-class amateurs and the professionals. H.H. Shri Ranjit Singhji, the Jam of Nawanagar, joined the Sussex Cricket club and scored 2780 runs in 1896. The *Encyclopaedia* notes, "Not only the English who live in India, but the natives also—Parsees, Hindus and Mohammedans alike—play cricket. A Parsee eleven visited England in 1884 and in 1888" (445).

R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends* is the great paean to this early Indian love of cricket. As the young boys in Malgudi grow up, Swaminathan and his friends find themselves not only in the midst of the Indian independence movement, but in this conflict of cultures and conflict of allegiances between their Indian upbringing and the Europeanization of a few around them. Swami is at first a student at the Albert Mission School, from which his father removes him because of the ways he has been getting into trouble. One of the ways is that he got involved in an independence movement strike and ended up burning his school cap. His father, on the other hand, is a Europeanized tennis-playing club-member who does not approve of what has happened to his son. Swami himself, though, was in awe of all things European. When the Britishized Rajam arrived at his school, Swami and his classmates were all greatly impressed by his western clothes, his airgun, and his westernized accent. They speculated that he had gone to an English boys school in Madras. All this was very impressive in the midst of the heat and dust of Malgudi and its Indian ways of being. Yet, when Rajam, the westernized boy, suggests that they form a cricket team, Swami feigns knowledge and love of cricket despite his great sense of

inferiority that he would not be able to play this great game of the civilized and even a little alienation at having to do so:

Swaminathan had not thought of cricket as something that he himself could play. He was of course familiar with Hobbs, Bradman and Duleep and vainly tried to carry their scores in his head, as Rajam did. He filched pictures of cricket players, as Rajam did and pasted them in an album, though he secretly did not very much care for those pictures—there was something monotonous about them. He sometimes thought that the same picture was pasted in every page of the album. (111)

Swami is ambivalent about things English, despite his great admiration for them, which is why chucking the match, as also the collection of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, is in a way a nationalist gesture for him, even though he is awed by the greatness of such a thing as cricket. He thinks himself seriously inferior to his westernized friend Rajam and unable to play the game. On the other hand, Bhuvan in *Lagaan* is quite certain that he can beat the British at their game: after all, wasn't the game just a version of the Indian *gilli-danda* (stick and ball—or ticklish stick—as the literal translation would be!)? Rajam, on the other hand, quite confidently even wants to call his team the M.C.C., the Malgudi Cricket Club, after the Marylebone Cricket Club. The great Australian legendary batsman, Sir Donald Bradman, was indeed in India, as Gideon Haigh said, "Sir Donald Brandname" (*Cricket* 413). Jack Hobbs, who played for Cambridgeshire, on the other hand was called by Ronald Mason "a fifth century Greek"—meaning that he was civilization itself! In this august company was Duleepsinhji (sic) playing with Hobbs, Wooley and Hammond at Lords (*Cricket* 323).

Rajam soon immerses Swaminathan in the world of cricket. But Swami is a reluctant recruit. He tries to find all sorts of little excuses not to have a cricket team. He pleads that they might be taxed, which leads to questioning who their government is—His Majesty, or the viceroy. This is the

beginning of the opposition of the nationalist sentiment with the anglicization, particularly through cricket, that is taking over the boys' life. One day, sidetracked to a political protest while going to school, Swami hears:

Just think a while. . . . England is no bigger than our Madras Presidency and is inhabited by a handful of white rogues and is thousands of miles away. Yet we bow in homage before the Englishman! . . . Let every Indian spit on England and the quantity of saliva will be enough to drown England.

Later Swami asks his friend Mani,

"Is it true?"

"Which?"

"Spitting and drowning the Europeans."

"Must be, otherwise do you think the fellow would suggest it?"

"Then why not do it? It is easy."

"Europeans will shoot us, they have no heart," said Mani.

(95)

But anglicization takes the upper hand. The boys start pouring over Messrs. Binns and Company's catalogue and even go so far as to venture to order items they cannot afford or pay for, while drooling over Willard Junior bats. When Swami does a great bowling job, he is called Tate, after the famous British cricketer.

Thus, Swami seemed to have a genuine tug in his heart against this anglicization. Swaminathan was at the Board school, the Indian school, as opposed to his friends, the boys of the Albert Mission School. He would in fact have been playing cricket against his own school with his anglicized friends—Rajam and Mani. Rajam was also pressuring him to ignore his school work and practice cricket. He also felt pulled towards his obligations towards his old "granny" who did not know anything about cricket and the M.C.C. but could take care of a fever and extend tender loving care in the Indian way. Soon he begins to feel like an outcast for being at the board school and inferior to his friends. Instead of accepting the challenge from where he is, Swami, unlike Bhuvan in *Lagaan*, decides to run away to Madras.

While his parents are anxiously looking for him, he is lost and languishing, not for cricket, but for ghee and curds and for being fed on a leaf (160). In his delirium in the forest, he had dreamt a cricket victory, when in actuality he has missed the game and won the ire of his friend Rajam, who seemed to care not for friendship but only for cricket. What is Narayan saying here about the callousness of westernization? Mani turns out to be the go-between between Rajam and Swami, and tells Swami why his so-called friend Rajam will not ever speak to him, "You have ruined the M.C.C. You need not have promised us if you wanted to funk" (177). Timid and cloying, Swami still comes to the station to bid Rajam good bye when his father is transferred. He gives him his only fine possession, Hans Christian Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, which he considered too foreign anyway. In this one gesture, the boy who wanted to be the bowler Tate chooses instead to give up on his fascination with Englishness and shrinks from the appearance of Rajam as a "European boy" if not only out of inferiority but from sudden self-disgust (148). Narayan wants us to think of this as the self-disgust for wearing the European mask. Although the novel ends on the note of Mani's inscrutable face, representing the stereotype of the inscrutable Indian, the sadhu Easterner, the colonial gaze is averted. Swami, it must be conjectured, turns to his Indianness.

*Lagaan* is not so subtle in its writing back against empire. It is set in Champaneer in 1893. The film draws perhaps on a legend of the people of Kutch where a certain British captain challenges the Indian peasants to a game of cricket in exchange for forgiveness of taxes. Captain Andrew Russell is a cardboard stereotype of the colonizer: a Hollywood stereotype borrowed by Bollywood. He is a character with no complexity. From the very first, he is portrayed as a tyrannizing oppressor who tries to make the groveling Maharajah eat meat and bets on anything and everything. Playing on Satyajit Ray's *Shatranj Ke Khiladi*, where the Mughal Empire is lost to the British on a chess

bet, is Captain Russell. He is annoyed by the fact that an illiterate farmer sitting on the periphery and watching the "great game" of cricket chooses to call it a silly game, and he challenges Bhuvan to win at cricket in exchange for avoiding being taxed double and triple.

The defiant Bhuvan manages to convince the scared and recalcitrant farmers of his region to take on this challenge. The film opens with a song whose refrain is *Ye dharti apni hai*, ("this land is our land") which is almost an American refrain. In *Lagaan*, cricket becomes the ultimate battle. The civilized Captain Russell is disgusted that the Indians would dare to touch his ball. He is so offended by Bhuvan claiming that cricket was an Indian game and that he could play it, that he, Russell says, "I'll forgive your tax [*lagaan*] if you beat us in this game. But if you lose, I'll triple your tax." "Sharat Manzoor Hai?" which can be translated as, "Is the bet acceptable?" Bhuvan accepts the challenge, much to the chagrin and fear of his neighbors and community. After much training and with the stroke of luck of the Captain's sister teaching them the game out of her infatuation for Bhuvan, the game begins. The most Hindu of the players, an astrologer, calls out, "a farangi a," as he plays every bat and bowl: "come on foreigners, I'll show you" is the translation. However, the umpires rule the game fairly, noting the British mistakes and giving the Indians another chance to win. Captain Russell himself admits defeat, when he realizes that he has caught Bhuvan's ball just "beyond the boundary." C.L.R. James says of the colonials playing cricket, "we learned to obey the umpire's decision without question, however irrational it was" (25). It is to the credit of the British, that in this case, and given the power they did have that they admitted their defeat. Russell looks down at his feet and sees that he is "beyond a boundary." C. L. R. James tells us about cricket, "We did not denounce failures, but 'well tried' or 'hard luck' came easily to our lips" (25). We actually see the British putting this into practice. So that

in a way, while *Lagaan* shows cricket as war, it also, like *Swami and Friends*, is a paean to "the great game."

There are very many interesting interactions in *Lagaan*. There is Lakha, a disgruntled Muslim woodcutter, who tells on the team to the British, making it known that Elizabeth is coaching them. There is an interesting version of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream speech" in Hindi song. But the most interesting play is built around the disabled untouchable Kachra, whom none of the Hindus wanted included in the team, whose name literally means "trash," who goes against every sense of British athletic prowess and build and who in the end is able to bowl the ball with spins from his lame hand in a way as to defeat the British. The captain, "Sir," as he is called, meets him with the utmost disgust, so much as to say, "Can this person actually defeat us?" Bhuvan urges him on with "goron ke liye khel hai, hamari zindagi hai" [this is a game for the white people but a livelihood for us]. So, as James puts it, they learn to "play with the team, which meant subordinating your personal inclinations and even interests to the good of the whole" (25). Ultimately, while the film shows cricket as war and colonial resistance, it also shows the respecting of boundaries.

The British and the colonials have moved beyond the boundaries. In "the heterogenous jumble" (*Beyond* 25) of postcoloniality, the postcolonials have moved beyond many boundaries such as those of race, caste and country. The game itself has taken second place to soccer (football) or baseball and its oppositional quality is lost. Where ever it is played, it has become assimilated into the fabric of English or Indian or West Indian life, like the English language itself, triumphing over colonial mimicry and becoming one's own, not hybrid, but one's own. *Lagaan* is the great example of indigenizing a colonial past time. I reiterate, that it is not by hybridizing, but by making one's own enough with rough hewn bats and wooden carved balls, indigenous peoples are all able to triumph. Another theoretical language needs to be forged to see that terms like "colonizer" and "colonial

mentalities" have long outlived their usefulness and may even have been misrepresentations of intentions. The theory and approaches to reading intentions in texts, whether novels or films, are "just not cricket."

### Note

1. I have written elsewhere on the cricket match in my *Swami and Friends* as a metaphor through which Narayan delivers his concept of nationalism; see "Kim, Huck and Naipaul," "Teaching *Swami and Friends*," and *Family Quarrels*.

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