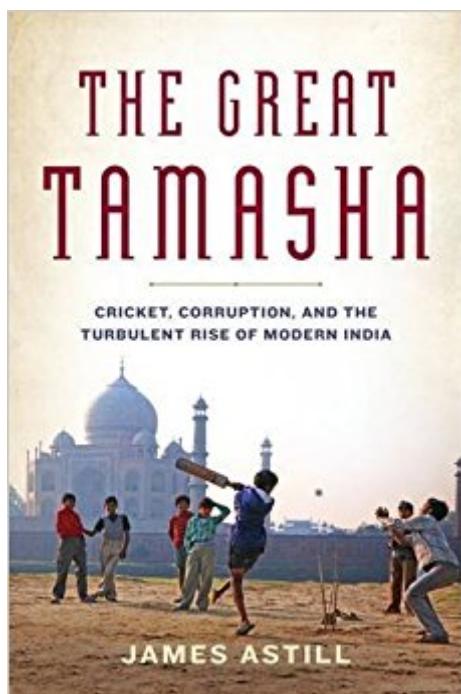


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# The Great Tamasha: Cricket, Corruption, And The Turbulent Rise Of Modern India



## Synopsis

To understand modern India, one must look at the business of cricket within the country. When Lalit Modi--an Indian businessman with a criminal record, a history of failed business ventures, and a reputation for audacious deal making--created a Twenty20 cricket league in India in 2008, the odds were stacked against him. International cricket was still controlled from London, where they played the long, slow game of Test cricket by the old rules. Indians had traditionally underperformed in the sport but the game remained a national passion. Adopting the highly commercial American model of sporting tournaments, and throwing scantily clad western cheerleaders into the mix, Modi gave himself three months to succeed. And succeed he did--dazzlingly--before he and his league crashed to earth amid astonishing scandal and corruption. The emergence of the IPL is a remarkable tale. Cricket is at the heart of the miracle that is modern India. As a business, it represents everything that is most dynamic and entrepreneurial about the country's economic boom, including the industrious and aspiring middle-class consumers who are driving it. The IPL also reveals, perhaps to an unprecedented degree, the corrupt, back-scratching, and nepotistic way in which India is run. A truly original work by a brilliant journalist, *The Great Tamasha\** makes the complexity of modern India--its aspiration and optimism straining against tradition and corruption--accessible like no other book has.\*Tamasha: a Hindi word meaning "a spectacle."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Cricket is an Indian game accidentally discovered by the British,” writes Astill, the Economist’s South Asian bureau chief since 2007, quoting Bengali sociologist Ashish

Nandy, who cites the game's endless digressions and "slow-burning dramas," the partiality of its victories and defeats, and its management of ambiguity and chaos, "the definition of all South Asian society." But that was 1989, and that was the long-form version of international Test cricket, which has been all but shoved aside by its surlier, more profitable, more impatient progeny: the Indian Premier League, which plays a more amped-up, zero-sum, one-day version. Astill explores the history of these changes in India and draws a direct link between a corrupted, bowdlerized but vastly more financially successful game with like changes happening in Indian society at large. Nonfans of the game could get bogged down in the telling, but as Jacques Barzun said about understanding America through baseball, so Astill's book gives an insightful take on modern India. --Alan Moores

"The Great Tamasha is a book of breadth rather than depth. It buzzes with field trips and brisk interviews that sometimes bring insight, and more often momentum and freshness." His depiction is close-up and entertaining. *New York Times Book Review* "Ambitious...The combination of reporter's notebook, sporting history and a descriptive style makes *The Great Tamasha* compelling reading." *Financial Times* "A stirring study by an enthusiast of the game." *Kirkus Reviews* "Pensive" at turns historical, sociological, and journalistic. *Publisher's Weekly* "As Jacques Barzun said about understanding America through baseball, so Astill's book gives an insightful take on modern India." *Booklist* "Peppered with star-studded interviews and transcripts of historic matches, Astill's history is a boon for any fan of cricket or interested bystander. Combining supple narrative and hard-hitting journalistic styles, his prose is a pleasure to read, with frequent wry humor bringing tears to the eyes." *Shelf Awareness* "Energetic reporting and a fluent grasp of history" a compelling rendering of a cricket-mad country. *The New Yorker*

Enjoyable only if you are a member of the commonwealth of cricketing nations. South Asian cricket lovers and their diaspora world over will find this entertaining. Having spent my youth in India, I think this is as real life as one can get. The history of Cricket in the subcontinent makes for fascinating reading. Some of the "villains" are now in the headlines in Indian news media. Could not put my kindle down & read it on my last trip to India in 2 days

Enjoyed it, but thought he could have woven his season with the Delhi Daredevils into the whole book better. Ended up feeling slow/dry at times.

Just wonderful reporting on the rise of the Indian passion for cricket.

Having been a fan of Twenty20 cricket, this was an enlightening book on the history, and culture, of the game from English roots to the Indian version. Thoroughly enjoyable.

As an expat I did not know much of this story. The book is both well written and well written.

Anyone who reads this book will afterwards see the Indian Premier League in a new, darker, even damning light. Astil holds the whole shenanigan up as a mirror to the so-called Indian Economic miracle, which makes millionaires of the relative few, but leaves hundreds of millions in poverty and squalor. Just today I heard that a pair of Gandhi's sandals has sold for 19000 GBP. Another indication, like that of the IPL, that India is in the hands of people whose ideology is greed and money worship.

Not bad from an outsider perspective. Not something you would keep or lend after few years.

Author has given an excellent perspective on the obscene IPL and the deterioration of this wonderful game worldwide. Also you realize how India has become a nasty Bully in the World of Cricket administration !

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