



NIRAD C.CHAUDHURI AS A PRODUCT OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE-AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Nirad C.Chaudhuri has been regarded as a controversial writer in India. He came into the world in 1921, and he suffered an extreme poverty, want and humiliation. He served as a commentator in All India Radio at Delhi, and for a few years he rendered his service as a clerk in the Department of Military Accounts. His statements and opinions on some issues are highly controversial. Chaudhuri's view of social, cultural, religious and political environment is biased. Indeed, it has been proved through his writings that he is unfair to India; he has thrown only prejudiced or biased comments on India. He admitted England was the home and shelter of his body and spirit. He concentrated much with the contemporary situation in India. As an intellectual he excludes artists, painters, musicians and sculptors from the category of intellectuals. He finds both moral and intellectual dishonesty in Hinduism, and glorifies British rule in India. Chaudhuri expresses his deep concern over rampant, corruption, and decay in values and morals after the attainment of independence. He refuses to admit racism into literature and does not accept the existence of Indian writing of English. He dubs the Indian National Movement. To him Hinduism is conspicuous by the absence of spirituality. He looks at everything Indian from jaundiced western eye who was emotionally alienated himself from Indian life. His The Autobiography of An Unknown India is concerned with contemporary history and the author's self revelation which is the focal point in the art of writing autobiography.

Key-Words: political environment, humiliation, bias, autobiography, national movement, Hinduism, British rule, etc...

Introduction

Nirad C. Chaudhuri, India's one of the most controversial writers, who was born at Kishorgunj in East Bengal. He was highly influenced by his father Upendra Narayan Chaudhuri and he learnt an undeviating love for principles and good manners from his mother. His mother told him the story of Shakespeare's King Lear, and he himself became an active participant in Shakespearean procession by learning the stories of The Merchant of Venice and

Julius Caesar. Besides, England fascinated him and the English scene was as a real geographical setting for his life. Chaudhuri was much fascinated by the poems of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shakespeare, Webster, Rupert Brooke and Campbell which gave him inkling into various aspects of England and English life. He was brought up in an anglicised intellectual environment and he grew up to be an inveterate anglophile. At the age of twelve he came under the influence of Indian Renaissance. He came into the world in 1921, and he suffered an extreme

poverty, want and humiliation. He served as a commentator in All India Radio at Delhi, and for a few years he rendered his service as a clerk in the Department of Military Accounts. During this period he came in close contact with the stalwarts of the freedom movement-Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose and many others. His statements and opinions on some issues are highly controversial. Chaudhuri's view of social, cultural, religious and political environment is biased. Indeed, it has been proved through his writings that he is unfair to India; he has thrown only prejudiced or biased comments on India.

Review of Literature

Chaudhuri finds both moral and intellectual dishonesty in Hinduism, and glorifies British rule in India. He expresses his deep concern over rampant, corruption, and decay in values and morals after the attainment of independence. A man of principles, he never cared for position and fame by begging favour. His first book *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* stormed into popularity just after its publication in 1951. Chaudhuri, the most controversial writer of India, is a product of Indian Renaissance. He admitted England was the home and shelter of his body and spirit. He concentrated much with the contemporary situation in India. As an intellectual he excludes artists, painters, musicians and sculptors from the category of intellectuals. He finds both moral and intellectual dishonesty in Hinduism, and glorifies British rule in India. Chaudhuri expresses his deep concern over rampant, corruption, and decay in values and morals after the attainment of independence. Chaudhuri wrote his autobiography for the academic circles in the West, under whose influence he grew up-and to whom he owed all his intellectual and academic attainments. In order to appease his European mentors Chaudhuri makes scathing and derogatory comments on Indian civilization and the entire course of the development of Indian history. *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* was dedicated to the memory of the British Empire in India. In order to glorify the British rule in India, Chaudhuri has presented a highly personal and distorted view of Indian history. He finds both moral and intellectual

dishonesty in Hinduism, and glorifies British rule in India. Chaudhuri expresses his deep concern over rampant, corruption, and decay in values and morals after the attainment of independence. He refuses to admit racism into literature and does not accept the existence of Indian writing of English.

He dubs the Indian National Movement. He describes the human situation in India after independence. He applies the historical process and finds no stability in Indian culture through the ages but discovers a dynamic and continuously changing process, within which history and geography have worked to create dissimilar communities and endless conflicts. He blatantly denies all spirituality in Hindu religious books. Chaudhuri puts forward the irrational and unfounded thesis and Hindus are really Europeans, corrupted and denatured by the tropical environment. He looks at everything Indian from jaundiced western eye who was emotionally alienated himself from Indian life. His *The Autobiography of An Unknown India* is concerned with contemporary history and the author's self revelation which is the focal point in the art of writing autobiography. He is optimistic and suggests that by the application of 'his own faith, energy and intelligence' the intellectual can ameliorate his condition. The intellectual is frustrated in India and he must rise to the occasion to overcome his difficulties. Chaudhuri discusses the three intellectuals in India-the Hindu, the Muslim and the modern. The Hindu tradition which was initially fresh, vigorous, flexible and receptive to foreign influences started showing signs of decadence and fossilization about one thousand years ago. The intellectual world was confined only to the Brahmin caste. It restricted and dampened the spirit of independent intellectual enquiry. The Islamic tradition, though wholly uninfluenced by the Hindu, stressed on the continuation of the divinely ordained Islamic way of life and correct interpretation of the Islamic sacred law. The modern or the Westernized intellectual tradition was the result of the westernization of the Hindu mind during the British rule. Rajaram Mohan Roy, the chief architect of Indian Renaissance, began the modern intellectual tradition. As an intellectual he

excludes artists, painters, musicians and sculptors from the category of intellectuals.

Conclusion

Nirad C. Chaudhuri, in spite of being one of the greatest intellectuals and thinkers, is the most controversial writer in Indian English prose. He has offended his countrymen, whose national pride he has remorselessly hurt, and hence, they are reluctant to accord him his due place as a writer and thinker. He is an Indian English writer of eminence, who is closely related with Indian ethos and sensibility and who, in spite of his vehement denial, has imparted native flour to English. He is an erudite intellectual who has the courage to stand apart and be different from the crowd. As a critic of society he makes surgical probes with an almost Swiftian comprehension. He is the fiercely honest and unsparing critic of man and morals and manners in contemporary India. Indeed, he is more Indian than most Indians and more English than many Englishmen. With this double edge of sensibility Chaudhuri achieves insights denied to most writers, but he also isolates himself from the crowd, hence, his solitariness and the strength and weakness arising there from.

Thus, as a conscientious craftsman and stylist, and autobiographer and biographer Chaudhuri's place is very high. The vigour of his logic, the eloquence of his utterances, the flexibility and lucidity of his expression, his unsurpassed intellectual brilliance and wide scholarship, his boundless capacity for original thinking and immaculate command over English assign him a privileged place in English Literature.

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