

Nirad C. Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian*: A Factual Revelation of Man, Milieu & Settings

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ABSTRACT

This research paper attempts to delineate and outline the Nirad C. Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* as a factual revelation of man, milieu & settings. Chaudhuri is a man of ingenious brilliance and has the benefit of a prominent and impregnable consign in Indo-Anglian literature besides. Chaudhuri's autobiography is the most distinguished and the most vituperated manuscript. Chaudhuri determinedly depended on an egotistical peak of view which amounts to a persistent self-justification. This is one of the most advantageous instances of the most substantial, divergent discursive exertion to be engendered by esteem and distaste of Indian-British interface and edge. His autobiography further articulates in a diplomatic approach the distinctive variance endured by a middle-class Indian thinker near the commencement time of the twentieth century, for the reason that of his European susceptibility attained in the itinerary of English edification and Western influence. His intention is to tell the anecdote of the struggle of a civilization with hostile scenery and settings in which the destiny of British ruling in India became involuntarily occupied. Definitely, his autobiography is more of a nationwide than personal and private recitation as it makes public supremacy to the education larger than the originator in addition to this, it is more of an executive anthology than life story. This is less an exposure of his livelihood and personality and narrowly taps the theme and issues of self-introspection. Chaudhuri's inferences as an autobiographer come

from the immensity of his writings, his intelligence, his inimitability, his debatable, persistently incompatible sociological hypothesis and verification interpretation, and better than that, the self-respect and respectability of the assortment of English he writes.

Keywords: Contemporary issues, English autobiographies, man, milieu, settings, sociological hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION

Nirad C. Chaudhuri (1898-1999), is deliberated as one of the eminent and prominent writers. He has written a variety of marvelous books on varied themes. He is a man of ingenious brilliance and has the benefit of a prominent and impregnable consign in Indo-Anglian literature besides. Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* is the most distinguished and the most vituperated manuscript. Chaudhuri determinedly depended on an egotistical peak of view which amounts to a persistent self-justification. This is one of the most advantageous instances of the most substantial, divergent discursive exertion to be engendered by esteem and distaste of Indian-British interface and edge.

Chaudhuri instigated constituting the hypothesis of *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* in 1947 and published in 1951. Through the publication of his autobiography Chaudhuri was explode into renown. This is a notable reserve nonetheless it is subsequently well proven distinguished as an astonishing Indian finished intellectual all over the English speaking sphere subsequently its publication. The publishing manager of the Glasgow Herald further explores that, "This is an extraordinary book. It is written by a Hindu of East Bengal who has never been in Europe, (A Passage to England, 1959)... yet with a command of English that is not exceeded by Mr. Nehru himself... No other Indian self-portrait can compare, for interest or challenge, with this product of a tortured and assertive spirit" (I).

The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian in the trail of illuminating the flimsy dynamism of the creator, articulates in a diplomatic approach the distinctive variance endured by a middle-class Indian thinker near the commencement time of the twentieth century, for the reason that of his European susceptibility attained in the itinerary of English edification and Western influence. His intention is to tell the anecdote of the struggle of a civilization with hostile scenery and settings in which the destiny of British ruling in India became involuntarily occupied. Chaudhuri publicized that he sought a confession of self-reliance, since afterwards ephemeral the age of fifty Chaudhuri was confronted with the compulsion to sculpt off the years Chaudhuri had existed so far and initiate life an altered. On this groove, on the other hand, Chaudhuri cannot be predetermined, as George Misch (1950: 10) writes that, "The urge to talk about their lives is felt even more when they are smarting under the frustration of their hopes of accomplishment". Subscribing as Chaudhuri does, "to a creed of intellectual Prometheans" (523), Chaudhuri resentfully pickets his sovereignty to contemplate and is gratified of his iconoclasm. Chaudhuri autobiography stiffens through immeasurable decidedly provocative proclamations such as, "Hinduism..... has always been an admixture of foreign goodness and indigenous debasement (208). The Indian middle-class intelligentsia is too worldly wise to be swept off its feet even by the rabid nationalism which is the stable of its recreational mood (255). Neither his (Gandhi's) station in life nor his English education succeeded in making him understand the things of the intellect and civilization. He remained profound uneducated in the intellectual sense...Gandhism... remained the morality of servos (444).

Beyond qualm, Chaudhuri's autobiography is more of a nationwide than personal and private recitation as it makes public supremacy to the education larger than the originator in addition to this, it is more of an executive anthology than life

story. This is less an exposure of his livelihood and personality and narrowly taps the theme issues of self-introspection. It is, on the other hand, an erudite scrutiny of his locale. Chaudhuri additionally explores that, "This Book describes the conditions in which an Indian grew to manhood in the early decades of the century... The story I want to tell is the story of the struggle of a civilization with a hostile environment, in which the destiny of British rule in India became necessarily involved. My main intention is thus historical, and since I have written the account with the utmost honesty and accuracy of which I am capable, the intention in my mind which has become mingled with the aspiration that the book may be regarded as a contribution to contemporary history (ix). Chaudhuri's enthrallment for the whiles of yore has been subsequently to his college days, and although only twenty, he wrote an incredible article on "The Objective Method in History"—and his autobiography could indeed be regarded as a contribution to the modern history. Conversely, we clinch by K.R.S. Iyengar (1989: 591)—which, by the way would most probably be the conclusion of every other bookworm of this autobiography that, "It is clear then that Chaudhuri's real aim is to write history and the autobiographical exercise is merely a means to get the history started".

Chaudhuri's life history divulges not intermittently, a vision into his inquisitive concentration, which has continually been cautious and sentient. The universal attendance is virtually mechanically given up, and previously Chaudhuri becomes responsive of it and seizures to his confirmed 'objective method', Chaudhuri articulates the utterly elusive outward. Chaudhuri's autobiography is designed ringing a perception of place, which is revealed as the great resources by which personified account is carried to endure upon evolution and inference of place in Chaudhuri's life is the attitude of work of art in this autobiography, and its spread from side to side the progression of places, Kishorganj his country-birth place, Banagram his inherited township, Kalikutch his mother community, Shillong

the Assam hill station, an imaginary England and an additional than genuine Calcutta, is controlled by ingenious tact's which marks it an trustworthy configuration conforming an innermost creativity, excluding intended for the concluding part where it comes a completion in a handled and ineptly inappropriate decision in an elongated, hypothetical composition on the development of Indian history. Chaudhuri's admission of the Kishorganj Fair is gratified by the exclusive resilience of reminiscence. He further explores that, "If the whole generation of grown-ups had immolated themselves under the car, I do not think that would have made much difference to the enjoyment of us, the children. It was the fair for boys and girls, with dolls of many bewildering varieties, as good to smell as to see. There was an immense number of the famous Bengali doll which went under the name of the Spoilt Baby. It was either bright pink or flaming scarlet and it was given an ample middle to indicate that it had been spoilt by the most efficient method of accomplishing that end we knew of in Bengal. As soon as we had made our selection the potter-stall-keeper brushed it over with a quick drying varnish and handed it to us, and we walked on looking at and smelling the doll alternately" (34).

Nirad C. Chaudhuri's astonishment of the Durga Puja is the reparation of the gesticulating of summit. Chaudhuri in addition explores: This ritual was nothing more than the priest waving five brass lamps fixed to a branched bracket in the face of the gods and the goddesses. He held the lamp bracket in one hand and a bell in another and moved backward and forward and from side to side in a sort of subdued dance to the tune of the shrill music. The women, in shining silk as before and loaded with gold ornaments, stood at the sides like two rows of ballerinas, making on the whole a well-composed scene even when in motion. We, the boys, and the men stood in the pavilion, mostly chattering and looking on, but at times also sending up the shout: "Victory to the Great Goddess." The hubbub was deafening. The young men took advantage of this

opportunity to have a good look at the young women, whom, unless they were close relatives of equal or inferior status, they had no means of seeing in the ordinary course... All this struck us as very clever and wonderful. The ritual lasted for about an hour (79).

Chaudhuri's years in Kishorganj are completed aimed at a comprehensible proclivity of consciousness. Chaudhuri in addition reveals, during the course of the exhaustively duteous immediate of routine lifecycle, besides analysis of an unambiguously liberal the social order, in which cinema, rhyme, value and mediocre lifespan were exhaustively merged. Chaudhuri further explains: We always had plays at the time of religious festivals and weddings, and at times also for their own sake. The repertory, though large, was almost exclusively drawn from either of the great epics, the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata*, and the stories were thus familiar to the audience. From this followed that the watching of the plays was even for young people like us not a passive gulping down of a story but an appraisal, in the light of a critical code which was never crude, of points of composition and acting, and, at times, even of doctrine (70).

CONCLUSION

Chaudhuri's places in early days paid consideration on the Indian light; Calcutta is a prism flouting it into its sections and colder branches. Therefore, Chaudhuri's autobiography is further elaborated, illuminating and encompasses greatly superior pustule of incidents. Even though it lacks the structural nimbleness, it nevertheless attracts the oddity for being the accustomed version of his derivation and upbringing however with an elaborated portrayal of the places where he lived in his early days. *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian*, S.P. Swain (2000: 83) comments, "is concerned with Nirad C. Chaudhuri's fascination with himself". Hence, *The Autobiography of An*

Unknown Indian reveals Nirad C. Chaudhuri's way of life from his genealogy to student days till 1921 merely. Consequently, Chaudhuri's inferences as an autobiographer come from the immensity of his writings, his intelligence, his inimitability, his debatable, persistently incompatible sociological hypothesis and verification interpretation, and better than that, the self-respect and respectability of the assortment of English he writes.

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