



Social crisis in a new world by Amit Chaudhary

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Abstract

A social crisis is any change or event that pushes a government a nation or people into such severe pressure that a breakdown of law and order may result. These crises can be anything from a war, unhappiness with political leadership, economic failure, natural disasters like floods and hurricanes or the outbreak of disease. The social crisis depends upon the nature, culture, customs and environment. Many authors wrote about social crisis that affect the society in their novels such as Carol A Ireland, Martin J Fisher, Gregory M Vecchi, Edward P. Borodzicz, Wilhelm Roepke etc. Amit Chaudhuri is also a writer who has used the theme of social crisis in his novels. His works reflect the Indian values and Bengalis' which pave a ground for them to move forward. In this novel, the behaviour of Jayojit reflects the opposition of evils practiced in the society. Amit Chaudhuri emphasizes the social values such as culture, marriage system, environment and emotions, feelings in the living society through the character Jayojit.

Keywords: social crisis, Bengalis'

Introduction

A social crisis is the event that is going to lead an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community or whole society. Crises are deemed to be negative change in economic, political, societal, or environmental affairs. Many authors wrote about social crisis that affect the society in their novels. Amit Chaudhuri is also a writer who has used the theme of social crisis in his novels. He has made a mark in the pantheon of contemporary period. His works reflect the Indian values and Bengalis which pave a ground for them to move forward. In the novel, *A New World*, the behaviour of Jayojit reflects the opposition of evils practiced in the society. In this novel *A New World*, the main character is Jayojit Chatterjee. His ex-wife named as Amala and his only son Vikram or Bonny. Jayojit's old parents lived in Calcutta. His father's name was Admiral Chatterjee who was a retired Army man and his old mother's name was Ruby Chatterjee. The washer woman Maya and his Jewish colleague Leo were other small characters.

Jayojit Chatterjee arrives in Calcutta from New York for summer holidays with his seven-year-old son, Bonny after a divorce of marriage life. His divorced wife's name is Amala. Amala runs off with her gynaecologist and lives with him in San Diego in Southern America. After eight years of legal battle, the couple gets a divorce. "The court had ruled that Amala who'd taken the child with her in winter vacations" (NW89).

Jayojit wins the custody of the child for the summer days only. Deep in the heat of April, Jayojit visits his parents living in Sunny Park Apartment in Calcutta with his eight-year-old, American son, Vikram to spend his summer vacation and return to America in June. He stays with his parents, a retired Admiral and a housewife. It ensures two months of bonding between mother and son, mother and grandson, father and

grandson etc. The thing to be treasured in this book is Chaudhuri's delicately described dislocation and the disorientation. It unfolds the emotional life of these four protagonists.

In *A New World*, Jayojit's travels show the influence on the characters and events of his novels. Jayojit's parents are deftly depicted. His father is a retired Admiral of the Indian Navy. After a life of privilege, the old man and his wife have to fend for themselves and count every penny of their dwindling savings. "The Admiral was always aggressively telling his wife to save the cost of petrol driver's salary, things in general he asked to adjust the different rhythms of expenditure required after retirement" (20). Through this the author denotes the economical values in the Indian society.

At his Calcutta's house, Jayojit's mother was very old but she did all the house works with great pain and patience. She did all kitchen works and cleaning works with the help of washerwoman Maya.

Jayojit recalling his memories in the street of Calcutta while he was walking. "In Calcutta Bonny was eating dhal and mild gruel with one green chilli afloat in it". (75). The eating habits of Bonny were totally different from America so he suffered for barring this culture.

At the time of his vacation, Jayojit had taken his son Bonny to all places like parks, libraries, food stalls, book shops and also he introduced his old friends. In every incident in Calcutta the author recollects his memories through Jayojit. The social values like social, economical, political and environmental issues will be delivered in every chapter. "When they were talking about the appeal of New York, and the fact that New York is attractive to every kind of Indian" (103). There is an imaginary thinking that foreign countries were very rich and happiest places and India is a poor country and all the people lived in it were lead their life with struggle. This is not at all

fact by the character Jayojit. He was really felt that the own cultures and customs were more precious due to his own experience and his own real life.

When Bonny was ill due to nose sniffing, his father take him to Dr. Sen and thereafter he was cured. At the time of illness, the atmosphere of hospital was not suited to him. He was suffered very much at the time. The Atmosphere and surroundings will play an important role in one's life. "The boy still sniffing, he shouldn't come to this city at all, it isn't good for him"(122).The author is also aware of the boundary of feminism and looking at the pictures of Jayojit, Bonny, and his old parents. All the same, Jayojit fails to understand Amala's assertion and selfhood semiotically encoded in his narrative and it is this, not divorce, which causes commotion in the seemingly stable world of Calcutta. All this and much more, so minutely and sensitively observed and recorded and enclosed by the tragedy.

There is a no way a feminist that is Jayojit who is considered feminism and intellectual plague and had once argued with a Jewish colleague Leo, "That America had taken away the controls of the institution of marriage but replaced them with nothing else especially the free market economy is held together by tiny rules more subtly graded than the caste system"(169).

Chaudhuri indicates the marriage system of America and India which is different in all cultures and natures. He emphasised the importance of family which is center-oriented the life. His novels are a discourse on the ordinary and common place but unless he is able to show how unique the ordinary and common place can be, he cannot be at peace with his creative selfness. He illuminates what is wondrous in the ordinary by carefully structured expressions or images. Before leaving Calcutta, the day before, he advised his son that "This is not a fun trip"(154). By saying this Jayojit is considered as a loving father and he respect his nativity and culture.

The author also emphasis the cultural value. "Jayojit travelled to Bangladesh Biman ticket center to reconfirm his returning journey."(163). On the way, he recollected his memories, its locations and images.

After completing his procedures in Bangladesh Biman's center, he returned to his house. At that night, he was so emotional and so sensitive. "When he switched off the light, for a moment, he could see nothing-the room disappeared. It never became so dark in the room in Claremont."(181).He began to make his way toward the bed, trying to imagine, from his memory, its location.

The next day evening, Jayojit and Bonny left from Calcutta (183).By saying a farewell to his old parents and saying thanks to God, (187). Jayojit and Bonny reached the Dhaka airport (188). From the Calcutta visit, Jayojit had a lot of collections of emotions about his life which was affected the social, economical, political and environmental values. Finally, they went to New York after completing their summer vacation having a lot of values about the life.

The experiences of Jayojit himself had too many sensitive experiences to be able to return to the past. He is indeed a different person from the child he was once. The author shows the different types of incidence and emotions in day to day life based on the social, economical, political and environmental basis. Chaudhuri takes the Bengali and American culture and

reveals the truth. As like as Jayojit, we also knew the systematic values of the family, food, culture and customs, environmental factors, mother language, social approaches that living in the society, the nature of government systems and system of marriage. However it is not just the difference in social classes and unfamiliar customs and unwanted rituals, we Indians should bear all the things happily and easily acceptable.

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