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Modern Kolkata Youth in Mohit Chattopadhyay's Plays

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Abstract

Mohit Chattopadhyay is a dramatist with difference. His plays (1963) starts with the sufferings of youth in post 2nd world war days. With the changing milieu his plays are also changing. He is afraid and conscious in 1990's economic – social – political situation. The market economy, consumerism are engulfing our youth. He jeers it and tries to caution us in his plays. He also wants to cultivate self confidence in the young people. He starts his journey with the suffering of so - called aberrant youth. The playwright is also conscious about honest, conscientious youth whom the society wants to see. He continuously cautions us about socio - economic - political situation which have emerges to destroy humanism.

Keywords: modern Kolkata, Mohit Chattopadhyay, Plays

Article

Kolkata is the city of theatre. With the advent of British culture the Bengali proscenium theatre started in Kolkata in 1795. The Bengali theatre started for amusement. The form of Art becomes very popular. In course of time the form of amusement gradually becomes serious in content and form.

The journey of Bengali drama started in kolkata, flourished in kolkata and spread in different districts. The Bengali drama undergoes many changes during these 200 years. Many eminent play wrights, directors and groups make this form a golden treasure. Mohit Chattopadhyay is also one of them.

Mohit Chattopadhyay, a playwright of kolkata, started a novel pattern in Bengali drama. In the galaxy of stars Mohit Chattopadhyay contributes a new pattern of thinking. He started with the form of absurd drama but negates the absurd philosophy. He tirelessly tries to imbibe positive thinking, motivates to work towards beauty of life.

With constantly changing time and milieu he changes his style. The contemporary socio - economic fabric of India, specially Kolkata, make him worried. He is conscious about this society and portrays the positive way of life, especially in his plays of 1990s and 21st century.

In 1990s market economy starts in India. The socialistic pattern of society is gradually diminishing. Liberalization, privatization, marketisation, globalization starts in India. This brings a different type of societal change. Consumerism engulfs the society where person becomes Commodity in the hands of business tycoons.

In mid 2000s India, it is evident that life for many Indians are changing rapidly, especially Indian youth. The post millennial era paves away for a new kind of content despatching the lives of urban protagonists who are ambitious, brand conscious, on par with the impact of globalization.

The vibrant, energetic, charismatic young people of the nation are transforming the society and culture, making it more profound and meaningful.

Media and social networking play a vital role in shaping the worlds of modern youth. Rejection of social values is predominantly found in the present day youth.

Mohit Chattopadhyay is afraid and conscious in this world. He starts writing new type of plays. Unlike his previous plays, these plays have a strong piercing story to awaken the society.

The new consumerism is approaching us like friend but they are cutting the edge. It is reflected in the play 'Octopus Limited'

In 'Octopus Limited' the two companies No.1 and 2 are preaching a boy and a girl in the park to accept money from any where. People need money to survive, to be a consumer in the market. The agent of Co.1 wants to sponsor their marriage and to bear their living cost for five years. The Co. 2 wants to sponsor their child also. Consumerists are ensnaring with entangles of Octopus, Mohit jeers it and tries to caution us.

The Playwright Mohit Chattopadhyay also shows some young people as philanthropist. He believes and tries to sow the seeds of feeling for another person(s) by creating Naren in 'Darpan'.

The apparently generous Dulal is basically selfish and unscrupulous. One night a helpless lady Swarna seeks shelter. Dulal refuses her. When she starts to shout, Dulal allows her to save his reputation. The next day Dulal throws her out. But his friend Naren brings the senseless stranger who happens to be Swarna, from the footpath and tries to treat her. In Dulal's opposition Naren says, "Let the people think anything, sick person should be treated and looked after properly." Mohit wants to awaken sympathy in the young people.

The sun of the one century sets and rises in the 21st century in a changing world, when west Bengal is politically unstable. At the same time Maoist movement is rising. Mohit is affected by this change, He is still looking for sensible young people. So, we get 'Virus' where the anger comes out rudely.

The Tele revolution of India makes the society sick. Tapas, a news-reader of Television projects it. One day while telecasting news suddenly Tapas starts to say about the "Gullibility" of Television. The Television news is the product of business tycoons and political leaders. It does not projects the reality. He has been sent to mental asylum. After his release, he and his friend make a film on the yellow journalism. But they cannot make any TV channel to telecast the film. They show the film in different clubs, make people aware of this. They want to make a world where a child can say "I am not a market target".

Mohit wants to cultivate self - confidence in the young people. The old man in the park of 'Kouto' gives a brain-shaped container to two young artists. They are sceptic and don't want to buy it. The second artist wants to test it. He takes it but nothing appears. He disgustedly throws it. But in the hands of old man a golden light is glowing inside the container. The old man says "Everyone is talented." Confidence and courage can bring out the talent and change peoples life. This idea is also projected in his previous plays 'Lathi', 'Mushtijog' etc.

He apprises us about materialist world. Nowadays cell phone attracts so much that the people is talking in cellphone from the next room. Suddenly the phone stucked on 'Biku's' ear in the 'cellphone', No one can detach it. Biku's inner self tells him that addiction to materialist world lead to this problem. They would make Biku zombi. By making zombi leaders are benefitted, they can run their show. Nobody would be there to interrogate or protest. The consumerist society wants to make thoughtless, emotionless product whom they can buy or sell as per their wish. Biku doesn't want to be robot. Still he has a human in him. After realizing the fact Biku comes out from the addiction - and the phone can he detached.

Mohit Chattopadhyay starts his journey with the suffering of so-called aberrant youth. They cannot accept the prescription of the society, so they are abnormal to others. But they are the carriers of human values.

With the passing time and changing milieu his plays change. The young protagonists protest to have oppression - less society. The playwright is also conscious about honest, conscientious youth whom the society wants to see. He continuously cautions us about our socio - economic and political surrounding which have emerged to destroy humanism. His plays of last three decades are enlightening us not to be sold in the hands of a group of conceited people.

To knock vehemently, Mohit changes his form of drama. From loose, fragmented story line, his plays enter the complete story world. There are always some characters who are playing the tunes of love, ease and beauty. Mohit plays his tune all his life "not to touch the world with dirty hands." His sense of humanity enkindles hope of a new world where human race will not be seen with demon's face.

He underlines, in all his work s, that, night, however long and dark it may be, ends in a new dawn. Hence, instead of getting frustrated and aimless young people should put in hard and continuous efforts to usher in the new light as quickly as possible.
