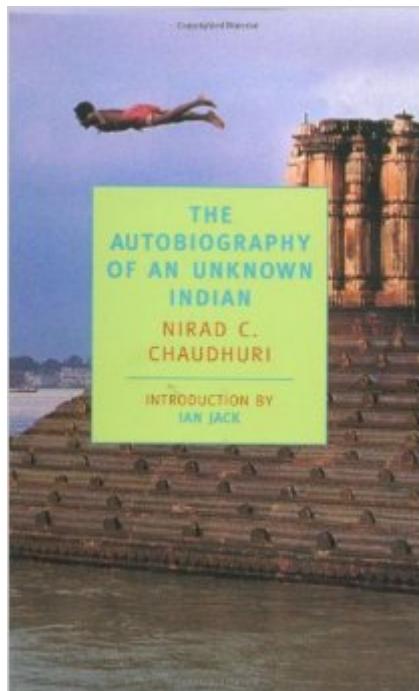


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The Autobiography Of An Unknown Indian (New York Review Books Classics)



Synopsis

The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian is an astonishing work of self-discovery and the revelation of a peerless and provocative sensibility. Describing his childhood in the Bengali countryside and his youth in Calcutta and telling the story of modern India from his own fiercely independent viewpoint Chaudhuri fashions a book of deep conviction, charm, and intimacy that is also a masterpiece of the writer's art.

Book Information

Series: New York Review Books Classics

Paperback: 640 pages

Publisher: NYRB Classics (October 10, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 094032282X

ISBN-13: 978-0940322820

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #808,471 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #170 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Asia > India & South Asia #849 in Books > History > Asia > India #22170 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Memoirs

Customer Reviews

This voluminous autobiography of Nirad Chaudhuri runs to 600+ pages on a book size that is larger than a pocket book. It is characterized by the author's keen sense of observation, with indication in every page, of his erudition especially in English literature, so much so that sometimes it becomes difficult for the lay reader to grasp the full purport of his account without the reader's own ability to appreciate the generous quotations from literary works of the Victorian Era. As a fellow Indian and coming from a family background similar to Nirad's (middle class, emphasis on morality and education during formative years, etc), the book is very engaging in that I could "live through" what the author recounts of his immediate and extended families, his home, town, school, teachers and life in general, although I come from a region in India far removed from East Bengal (which by the way was not a separate country then) both geographically, linguistically and to some extent culturally too. I have found a few things striking in Nirad's life, family and the general milieu that he grew up in: amazed by his liberal upbringing even in "those days" - especially his mother's

independent nature and 'going against the grain' that too for a woman; my confirmation of the Bengali's pre-eminent position amongst Indians in matters of literature (as well as art). People, I mean the educated class, would quote from literary works in everyday conversations and arguments; surprised by, how Bengali intelligentsia had fallen head over heels with Shakespeare's works.

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