

EVAM INDRAJIT

By Badal Sircar

(PART-3)

CHARACTER SKETCH OF INDRAJIT :

This discussion intends to analyze the character of Indrajit in the play “Evam Indrajit” written by Badal Sircar. Indrajit appears to be an angry young man in the play *Evam Indrajit*. Badal Sircar depicts an accurate image of the contemporary society in this play. This landmark play by Badal Sircar tries to portray the loneliness of Post-Independence urban youth with noteworthy precision. His main anxiety is the meaninglessness of modern life where the youth have no goals to live by and this makes the people like Indrajit angry at the meaninglessness of their existence.

The after effects of India’s Partition had created a spiritual trauma in the minds and hearts of the people. The educated urban middle class youth is frustrated as they do not see the real causes that they should live and die for. Indrajit becomes a spokesperson for all the youth of the country who wants a purposeful and meaningful life. Indrajit is quite similar to Jimmy Porter of *Look Back In Anger* (1956) a pioneering play in the Theatre of Anger. Jimmy also doesn’t find any real causes to live and die for. He shows his anger toward everything, the establishment, the press, the religion, his wife, his in-laws etc. *Evam Indrajit* is the story of a character namely ‘Writer’ who attempts to write a play but he tears up the papers as he feels the matter is not good and he doesn’t have anything to write about. He says:

“What shall I write? Who shall I write about? How many people do I know? And what do I know about them?”(*Evam Indrajit*,pg. 197)

He tries to write a play but admits that he knows nothing about the suffering masses, toiling peasants and sweating coal miners and that, he finds no beauty in the people around him. He is unable to find any appropriate subject as he finds nothing meaningful and mentionable in the lives of intellectually alive urban people. People are too busy with their jobs, promotions, anxieties of profit, loss, insurance, marriage etc. that they cannot be treated

as a befitting subject for a play. The writer shows no response to his Aunt who frequently asks him to eat the food. Manasi suggests that he may choose the characters for his drama from the persons he already knows- Amal, Vimal, Kamal and Nirmal (Indrajit). Nirmal fears to utter his real name Indrajit as he thinks it would invite unrest by breaking the norm. As the friends talk about cricket, football, literature and politics, Indrajit finds nothing exciting in them. He is angry because of the monotony of life. He exclaims:

Indrajit: I'm tired of being a student.

Writer: What do you want to do?

Indrajit: I don't know. Sometimes I just want to run away. (Evam Indrajit, pg.204)

Indrajit desires to flee to a world which is far away from these droning activities, but the cares of this world like mother and exam become a barrier before him. The entire movement of the characters is globular, there being no change or progress. The characters like Amal, Vimal and Kamal are insensitive, having no idea of the nature of their activities and are therefore not disturbed. They do not think over the things and just do what the society expects from them. But the characters like the writer and Indrajit who have the aptitude to think and critically evaluate themselves and to raise questions regarding the vainness of their life style are disturbed. They suffer as they fail to give meaning to their lives. This is the reason that Indrajit is accepted by the writer as a hero of his play. There is an obstacle in the relationship with Manasi. She happens to be Indrajit's cousin and the Indian society would not accept their love. It would be like breaking the norm.

Indrajit likes talking to Manasi because it is quite different from daily chatter. The behavior shown by Indrajit here is quite similar to the angry young man image. One of the main reasons of his anger is the monotonous boring things that take place in his life. He wants from life diversity which is missing most of the time. It is only in the company of Manasi he finds it but again the norms of the society become an obstacle in his way of marrying her.

Indrajit remarks about the unchanging things to the writer:

Indrajit: That all these minutiae- they are all meaningless

There is just a large wheel going round and round.

And we go round and round with it. (Evam Indrajit, pg.211)

This remark by Indrajit shows his anger and speaks about the futility of living life as there is no destination to arrive at. There is no progress. Rather the past and future is completely mixed. Amal, Vimal and Kamal have responsibilities of the retiring father and the unmarried sisters. They are desperately in need of a job. Indrajit admits that he also accept several rules of the society like study, taking exams, job etc. He wants to stand on his own. Again in the play we get a glimpse of the anger in the personality of Indrajit when he questions Manasi in the following manner:

Indrajit: Is there a rule that one has to abide by rules?

Manasi: What else can one do?

Indrajit: One can hate rules. Why should they be there at all?(Evam Indrajit,pg 215)

Indrajit is found to be ready to tear the rules and fight with the entire world. He is quite upset with the state that Leela is in, whose husband has died of Tuberculosis and her in-laws having taken her money throws her out of the house. He is also very much concerned about the condition of the shoe polish boy. Manasi feels scared to see Indrajit in this angry mood:

Manasi: When I see you like this I feel scared.

Indrajit: Like this? Like what?

Manasi: All this-this anger. Anger against rules

Indrajit: {Laughs} It's pointless anger. It's blind. Powerless.

It only beats it head against the wall.(Evam Indrajit,pg 216)

It is quite apparent that Indrajit realises that his anger towards society is meaningless, powerless and blind. If he had no knowledge about the problems existing in the society, he would have also lived a blissful life. Indrajit reiterates that when his anger would be gone, he would be finished. Amal, Kamal, Vimal and Indrajit gets job and discuss about children, medicine, cars etc. The writer thinks and speculates about the purpose of life. His Aunt rebukes him for not marrying at the right age. Indrajit frequently changes the job. He also makes a reference to the atomic weapons and their use.

In the beginning of the play, Indrajit shows his romantic temperament but gradually he is disillusioned. A daring attitude is demonstrated by him to protest against the strict norms of the society, but he does not find the same kind of co-operation from the side of Manasi, who prefers to be a school teacher at a distant place from her home. He goes to London and finds the similarity with his previous life. He even thinks of committing suicide but is not able to do so. He finally returns to accept the existing system.

Indrajit's approach towards life is completely different from other pseudo-modern people. He is seen making several efforts – protesting against the oppression, injustice, exploitation and hypocrisy of the society. Indrajit as an angry young man raises a voice against man's existential crisis, his absurdity, death-wish, unemployment and anarchy prevalent in the society. Life is to be lived with full enthusiasm, zeal and zest, in place of being relegated to death.

Indrajit in the first Act in an Angry young man, a rebel who doesn't want himself to be controlled by the so called norms of the society but as the play moves on, we find him succumbed to the pressures of social system. He even marries some other girl and bear the burden of meaningless existence. Still it is his utter realization of the world in which he is living, and his independent existence in the insensitive social system, which is a matter of great concern. The play ends with the note that there is no destination, but only the path. One must not lose faith and hope and continue putting in efforts.