

Two Facets Of Feminine Psyche In Deodas

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BEFORE analysing Sharat Chandra Chaltopa-dhyayais epoch making novel Deodas in a feminist cum feminine context, it becomes a desideratum to understand, what a work of fiction in translation is and what it is expected to be. “To test the closeness of any translation to its original, one would have to be not only bilingual but to coin an ugly phrase, bicultural, i.e. possessed of the whole complex of emotions, associations and ideas which intricately relate a nation’s language to its life and tradition, but possessed not only one such complex - as we are to some extent but of two”¹ Simultaneously, it should also be kept in mind that translation has been a global phenomenon; had Thomas North not translated Flutarh’s Lives, there would have been no Roman Plays of Shakespeare ; Dryden’s translation of Vergil is also remarkable ; “Translation of Literature and Letters is the principal means we have of understanding the world we live in.”² Sir William Jones translated translated Kalidasa’s Sakuntala and Manu’s Dharma sastra for the express reason that Indians were not the undisputed interpreters of their own laws and culture, Europeans must come forward as lawgivers to Indians, and a ‘purification’ could be done only by Europeans in a cultural context.

As a novelist of Bengal, Sharatchandra Chattopadhyaya was doing what Sophocles hard done in the field of tragedy as prevalent in ancient Greece ; both of them delved deep into the psyche and conflict of female characters ; if Sophocles created the character of Antigone to show the sisterly affection, Sharatchandra did not lag for behind in his concept of Manjhali Didi ; however it is in Indian land of paddy rops and adjacent pnds in every house that human relationships can be understood with utmost intensity. The story of Deodas doth another tale repeat ; here the reader finds two facets of feminine psyche ; on one hand there

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can prevent her, becomes evident from what Parvati replies, "Not at all, why should D fail"⁷ Such an action has got the divine sanction also; Parvati, having seen cupid burning due to the five coming out of the third eye of Lord Shiva, decided to practice penance ; her mother tried to prevent, but all went in vain:

[Thus disciplining her daughter to will power, Mena could not prevent her from endeavour ; who is there to revert the determined mind and down pouring water]⁸

The scales of love could not favour Aphrodite governing Parvati's psyche ; she is left to isolation ; apart from her determinism, her feminine existence comes in her way ; she metamorphoses herself into Mrs. Choudhary ; she becomes marble hearted and even the apologies of Deodas cannot melt her, as she retorts ; "My parents want the best for me ; so they would never have m fall into the hands of someone as ruthless, reckless and unwise as you."⁹ However, tables are turned, when the father of Deodas is dead, and Parvati comes to know about the infernal life that her lover has to lad in Calcutta ; the marble bosom is melted, but it is too late; however, "Deva leaves Parvati after promising to meet her once before is death"¹⁰

This climax brings to another world, dominated by Parvati's foil Chandramukhi, a so called prostitute ; her psyche is also ironical ; nobody can imagine that such a bad woman can also love a man and be a sincere caretaker to him ; she requests Deodas not to be an excessive addict to wine ; but this is also too late ; she turns out to be a philosopher of love and abandons all the types of bust, if ever it had been ; really she is sublimated ; she gives up all baser instincts down to earth.

What Sharatchandra has achieved is the juxtaposition of a wife and a whose ; the touch stone of love bends the one and holds up the other. "Parvati is the symbol of an ordinary woman from a middle class society whereas Chandra Mukhi is that from lower and defamed class."¹¹ This juxtaposition is 'the serpent of Nile'¹² and 'Triple turned whose'¹³ of Cleopatra, 'which is a monalisa of literature.'¹⁴.

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