



June 2016

Tatjana Debeljački vs. Rati Saxena

Interview

Rati Saxena

Can you tell us something about your hometown and growing up?

I was born and brought up in Rajasthan, (actually on 8 January 1954 but officially in 1953) in the east our country. In India, most of the people belong to the state and languages, but in my case, though I was born in Rajasthan, I do not belong to the language and culture of the state. My family language was Hindi. I was born in a middle class educated family, but in my childhood itself I had gone and lived with my maternal uncle (My mother's elder brother) in another city and state. Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. This was the most memorable period of my life, and memories of this period are still in me. When I was almost ten years old, I came back to my parents'. One good thing was that I never remained in one city more than two years, as father had transferable job.

As a student, I don't know about my early childhood, as that was the time, I was only enjoying and learning from surroundings, but once I was back to my parents' home, I was a bit more serious in study.

I belonged to the family of five daughters, so my education was always in Government schools, where there was no fees. One such schooling gave me a kind of freedom, as there was no pressure of studying hard. Though I was never a bad student, I never tried to work hard in studies.

In very early age, my school discovered a good debater in me, and when I was in 9th standard, I came to a small town, Chittoragarh. That was the time I was almost all-rounder student of that government girls school. I was acting in schools theaters, I was good debater, and also took part in school guiding. These two years were very active for me. When I had to go for college education., I came to new city again, and Jodhpur, and here my early college days were full of joy, cheerful life, a bit more towards study and away from extra activities, and this was girls college, where there was nothing to do expect study and some natural naughtiness.

For bachelor degree, I was again in new city, Jaipur. And here I got balance between study and extra activities, like College Theater and debates. My college days were full of confidence. I was good in theater, and other activities, same time was good in study also.

Though I was never a studious student, as I had an idea that there is no use of education for girls, they have to marry according parents' choice, and after marriage there is no place for anything.

And I was almost correct, as I had arranged marriage according Indian social norms,(in 1975) I never knew to whom I am getting married and what would be my life afterwards.

I married again in a middle class conservative family, where my uneducated and egoist mother in law was dominating like anything. My husband was a scientist in Rocket center, much educated, but with very little voice at home or other place. As I was only daughter-in-law, my mother-in-law try hard to make me very good house wife of her norms, means a woman who wakes up before morning, who sleeps at the end, who worked whole day, who serve the family like servant, who knows how to stich and cook. Her training style was not less than military style. Moreover she never left a chance t to make me realize that I am good for nothing. Naturally it was worse time for me, as I lost my confidence.

These 13- 15 years were my downfall, and I never imagine that I will come back from this Dark Age.

Oh, I forgotten to talk about my poetry, Yes I started writing poetry in my college days it self, though they were not so good, even I did not know that I am writing poetry. I was writing something, which was different than what we used to read in school books,

So in my dark age also I was writing, but most of my poems never got chance to come on paper, as I was always busy.

A fire was burning in me, I was almost mad with a kind of noise my brain was making, the so called art forms made for woman like stitching, embroidery , craft were not giving calmness to my brain. I was also extremely busy in my house hold duties. When it became difficult, I started listening to my mind, and gone for studying again, though I have completed my Doctorate by this time, still I was not eligible to get any kind of job, as I was in another state. I started everything from first stone, studied, than worked in a school than a college and then a university. I was extremely busy, I was not relived my so called good house wife duties, so working overtime, as daughter in law, as mother of two daughters , as teacher , there was very little time for me and my self. Only thing I gain was my lost confidence. Poetry was there in my books, but a number of thought die in my mind, as I did not have time to write down.

I could dedicated to writing only in my forties, my children grownup and I could manage to get a few minutes for me. So my first book got published very late, in my life time,

Once I became active in writing, I could understand that this is what I wanted to do whole life.

I was very active in writing in from 1994 onwards.

When did you publish your first book and how did the success follow later?

I do not know about Success, as for me there is no definition for success, I am still unsatisfied with my own work, and this continues made me work like mad. I have not completed my work, I have a big list of the things, I want to write, once the list is over, I will get feeling of satisfaction.

But sometimes I feel lucky as I was invited to most prestigious festival like Struga, Medellin, when I did not know about their importance.

The most important thing is that my fans are those, who could communicate with me.

The true purpose of art is to uplift humankind, inspire reverence and morality, and instill in people's hearts a true sense of beauty?

There is no doubt that the ultimate aim of art is for wellbeing of people. But how much of art reach to them? If I read a poem in a big platform, what does it matters? But if I read a poem to a sick person, and he or she gets some hope in it, will be a true poetry. But how many are doing such things? In kritya, we have gone to hospital, we wanted to use poetry as therapy, we want to other things too. We just hope that art can be useful to society.

This time

Editor and Vedic scholar writes Hindi and English, festival director of kritya International poetry festival?

The most satisfaction I get when I can write a poem, thinking and writing related to ancient literature is also interested to me, as the ancient literature gives me a mirror

to see the relation between society and literature. but that is a difficult job too , as the prose is more difficult for me than poetry.

The most painful work is as a festival Director.

Stories that create compositions full of sensuality, sometimes disturbing but always full of charm have the feelings of pain and pleasure?

Writing a poem is liking walking on the fire, a long experience convert in to poetry with lots of pain, before writing one gets disturbed, and off moods. Once you write down, a feeling of relief is there, and if you cannot write, a vacuum take place.

Contemplation on Cognizance of Life?

Our biggest search is for the meaning of life. We come to earth as human, is there any meaning for that? And do we give meaning to our life. In modern time, when social values are getting worse, the question has real meaning, most of our seers try to understand this.

We have a number of questions? Do we live for ourselves, or there is some power, which controls us, if there is some power, that what we are?

Does life is over with death, than what is the use of the life?

Why some of us suffer, and what is real suffering?

Why some of do not understand the meaning of suffering and the meaning of happiness

What is happiness? Why it is important to our life, and how it is difficult to achieve.

The human mind is full of question, but dangerous situation is, when we don't ask questions,

What can you tell us about your work, prizes, journeys and friendships?

My work--- hmmm, yes as I said, I have working experience in different fields. Still I am not satisfied with my own work, as I feel that most of the work I lost. I must say, my important writing is what I could not write.

Every time, I find difficulty to write first line, I think a lot and write less. Some time I feel that I am not a good writer. For long time, my fingers could not run with my thoughts,

I am a good speaker, but not a good writer.

I did not get very high prize till now, so don't know,,,,,

Yes, I could get a few good friends, I could meet so many good people. But if you ask me to count a few names, who could be called, when I am in need, I don't have any. Most of the time, I feel lonely, my loneliness is so thick that I feel lonely even in crowd.

I remember, when I was in Istanbul airport, I felt so lonely that tears started falling from my eyes. As I was in unknown country with unknown people around, I did not stop them.

Journey? Yes journey is always interested,

As most of the time, when we start our journey, we have an image of the place, where we have to reach. I did not have that image in my mind. As I was not confident of myself. I wanted to do so many things, and most interesting things were to Act the stage, which I lost, I used learn long Sanskrit Dialogue in my college

days, now I can't learn a line myself. I was good in debate, now there is no chance for that. I loved teaching too, and I got job as teacher also, but this was also not very satisfactory journey for me. I learnt Sitar, Indian instrument music, but I had to leave, after my marriage during my hard days.

I love dance and music, but can't dance or can't sing... now remain poetry.

Don't know, how it came to me, So journey is interesting?

In reality, I don't know, if I could achieve something, my heart is still empty, I still get disturbed by so many things happening around the world,

Do you think you have outwitted the expectations?

I don't think, I have not fulfilled my own expectations till now, I don't think that I could walk half way even.

How do you manage all that with so much work that you do? Do you have time for yourself? What inspires you?

As I told you, after my very early childhood, in my uncle's home, I was never with myself. I was always busy. Yes in my college days, I have enjoyed the life a lot with friends, but I was always working, there was a time, when there was no time for my. So when I get time to write, I feel this is my time.

Right now, I am working for myself, so I feel all time belongs to me.

I think, I should work more.

One thing let me clear, there are so many days, when I just don't work, neither write nor read, and thus I fill the vacuums.

Is there anything that you could pinpoint and tell us about yourself between dreams and reality?

I don't understand the definitions of dreams, in reality, my dreams are never with fairies or beautiful stories, sometimes I am afraid of sleep due to my dreams in reality but in common languages, we call the dreams, which we expect. So I never had any kind of wish. Life is reality for me, and this is cruel. From dreams to life is the journey between one cruelty to another one.

I wanted to do so many things like I want to dance, like to sing, like to paint, but I could not do all these. So

What are your plans for the future creative work?

I want to write about poetry therapy a detailed book. As when I read Atharvaveda, I am amused to see that the half of the treatment is done by chanting the hymns, do the words have power of healing? Do words communicate with other unknown powers? Right now, this is the biggest project for me.

I want to bring folk wall paintings to main stream, and like to work at that direction

I want to write a few more life and philosophy related work.

I have a dream project to bring poetry on the city walls, airports etc, which is not there in India, especially in Kerala.

I never plan for the poetry. As it comes, when it wants to come, so I just wait for it.

Rati Saxena's career in a few years?

Yes, in very short time, I could write so much, it amuse me even.

Have you achieved everything you have ever wanted to and if you could live your life again would you be an artist again?

As an artist, my list is too big, I want to dance, to sing, to act, and to paint, it means I can come back as an artist at least for four more lives.

Rati, **thank**-you! It was a great pleasure talking to you and you are always welcome to our house "Diogen pro culture" magazine.

PR
DIOGEN pro kultura
<http://www.diogenpro.com>