

Melody of Wounds: Revealing the Wounds on Civilization

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ABSTRACT

Nar Deo Sharma, the poet translator and critic of par-excellence is distinguished for scaling the literary work from the stand-point of linguistic and stylistic analysis. *Melody of Wounds* is the maiden collection of poet Nar Deo Sharma in which he has attempted hard to reveal the evils prevalent in the society i.e. corruption, greed, altruism, hypocrisy, spiritless ness, injustice, moral turpitude, hollowness of rituals, and debasing of human values. Nar Deo Sharma has tried to take out the wounds on the civilization which had been so ancient and glorious. The collection may be termed as the preventing agency of ills and chaos waving in atmosphere. He has used his sharp intellect to explore these wounds. Yet the word ‘Melody’ in the title of the book appears to make us feel that the poet is still hopeful to win the battle against these prevalent ills of the society.

Keywords: *Melody, corruption, spirituality, God, hypocrisy.*

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The collection seems to be a fine wreath of provocative poetry that may make each sensitive reader set out on a probe into the structure of society now losing its grip on the individual. Much of it seems to be a direct assault on the hypocrisy of prestige seekers in their angelic garb. Nar Deo Sharma himself asserts, “After undergoing the throes of extreme emotion, a poet delivers a good poem. I have painted a prickly panorama of social and political upheavals in my poems. By means of slashing satires, I aim at refining the political desperadoes. (‘Poet spirit’ *Melody of Wounds*)

Almost all the poems are drenched in the ink of revelation of social ills with satiric vision, excellent metaphors and beautiful phrases. Nowhere the poet seems detached from the worldly realities of life. In the poem ‘Law Court’ he does not believe in the procedure of law which ‘makes allowances for the hired arguments’ and does not readers the pains of victims. False oaths are unerringly taken there and God and truth both are murdered there. He says:

For the readers of your pains
How long will you cling to law

Which is so myopic, flimsy?
That it attaches credence
To such crowd of evidences
Who by their false oath
First murder the gods
Packed in the bundle
Of holy books
Then defeat the lonely truth. (Melody of Wounds 1)

He makes a dirty pen-picture of politicians who have all the qualities of devils in them. They are the sole nurturer of faults and fables in society. He says about leaders:

The x-rayed poverty of the nation
Paraded by skeletal, naked children
Who pick their tattered rights?
From the garbage of democracy
He sees but flouts poor pains
By spatchcocking sophistry
Into his political ravings. (Melody of Wounds 3)

Nar Deo Sharma observes the immortality even in the abodes of God and spirituality and adulteration has become the religion of man. People have created the sense of animal in him. 'Corruption has become the national character of man'. In such situations when women goes to 'Temple or dargahs/ to conceive blessings, but / from there they return / ravaged by the immortality / of God's sacred agents.' Not only social and spiritual ills are highlighted by him but he also casts his satirical glance on the marriage of the persons in which there is no attachment of thoughts and live is found. Silence is the only commerce to manage them. He pens the pathetic picture of such marital life as 'they lived aloof / in the apartments of their / clashing thoughts, pricking mannerisms'. He also explores one more scenario prevalent in new generation that is- they are as obstinate as not to leave the curving of their attitudes howsoever it mars the peace of their marriage life.

They could have cultivated
The spring of affections
But in the barren, hard soil
Of their arrogance, fastidiousness

Love was not possible to grow

To perfume their fusty lives. (Melody of Wounds 6)

Indian rituals and orthodoxy are also criticized by the poet here. He does not believe in the rites of 'Pindas'. They are like the debt to every Indian which he is sure to pay how much poor their economical condition may be. He is not ready to 'escape old rites that ossify' the progress of man although this way is very hard to cross. Dr. Satish Kumar says:

"A. K. Ramanujan in 'obituary' and Shiv K. Kumar in 'crematorium in Adikment, Hyderabad' also expose rituals ironically. Sharma surpasses them as far as the frank and candid exposure of hollowness of rites is concerned." (Melody of Wounds 40)

He says:

For want of rice, ghee, milk

My father gave way

To under death,

But to satiate

The offered pandas,

Ladled out ghee

On my dead father's dug pate

And debt heaped upon my fate. (Melody of Wounds 7)

Both social and individual shortcomings are exposed by the poet here. The poem 'show of sorrows', Sharma makes a fine distinction between the sorrows of both-man and woman. 'Acharya Rajneesh's Right Place' is a fine poem where the poet is at his wit's end to find the religions hypocrisy and showiness in worship. The temples are being used as 'Religious hospitals / where priests fob people off /with a veneer of their blessings / for the realization of people's / Desire of wealth, son, power.' According to the poet in this critical hour only Acharya Rajneesh can mint the coin of spirituality in right manner:

Acharya you're the lonely taper

Burning against the dark maelstrom

Of ancient, inverter ate dogmas

Is a fragrant bouquet

On the ancient graves

Of decadent religion. (Melody of Wounds 10)

‘Dead Joy’ and ‘Letter from a lost Daughter’, both the poems mirror, first the question mark on the female sex and then if they are survived, secondly, the question of their marriage and dignity raises its head for solution. In Dead joy the dilemma of a ‘would be’ father is portrayed well. The birth of a female child makes the hope of a father corpse like and then, he feels no faith in god, but if the child dies:

Your death---

Resurrection of god

In our faith. (Melody of Wounds 11)

Again, in ‘Letter from a Lost Daughter’, the another social evil of dowry is castigated and here the daughter’s dilemma is portrayed well and the daughter remembers with heavy heart that now much his father has to suffer for her ‘in the quest of / a well-paid, educated man who / rated beyond’ his her father’s poor dreams’. The poets becomes satiric here saying ‘people clam our for reform but / they live a lie, avoid nice deeds / only such norms of any good / people embrace that never clash / with their selfish ends but satisfy them’. In the pathetic end of the poem, the daughter urges the father to ‘Let her face the world alone’, ‘Suicidal note’ and ‘Melody of wounds’ ‘Suicide’ are the poems about which he himself says. “My three poems ‘Suicide, Melody of wounds, Suicidal note’- revitalized and redeemed a young woman from her king of suicide”. (Poet spirit Melody of Wounds)

Even amid the tornadoes of life, the poet is hopeful of good life and becomes ready to face pains because grief is the sobriquet of his destiny. So he says in the title poem ‘Melody of wound’:

I have the magic

To canalize the geyser of grief

Into the melody of wounds. (Melody of Wounds 27)

‘Remorse’ is a living example with aquet result of past misdeeds of a sun towards his mother. This vibrates the feeling of respect for parents in the new generation which is almost at its vanishing point in the present times. Next poem ‘Padmini’ shudders the modern woman who do not feel the need to protect their chastity at any cost while queen Padmini made futile all the attempts of Ala-uddin Khilzi to possess her, by hurling herself in the burning fire and ‘Ala-uddin got only the ashes of Padmini’s beauty.’ ‘Laxmi Bai of Jhansi’ and ‘Mother Teresa’ are also exemplary poems of love, brotherhood, bravery and humanity. The poem ‘dead city’

shows the altruistic society feels no need to open its window when somebody is in trouble. The poet says:

My pains
Quake me
Not the city. (Melody of Wounds 21)

The next poem 'Your Nasty world' also bears the same theme. 'Aftermath' is a bit similar in theme to 'Remorse'. The only difference between both the poems is that in the second poem, the poet longs profusely for the love of his mother. 'Heroic Pains' and 'Soldier's memories' are a pen-picture of soldiers' life and their hard lot, waiting for the end each time. Nar Deo Sharma laments at the deplorable condition of soldiers in the same country for which they are even-ready to sacrifice their life. The poet as the mouthpiece of a soldier says,

Ah, how shallow is the love
I reap from my country
My country's minted honors
Keep me in abysmal wants. (25)

While the same victory for the country, they get at the heavy cost of missing their wives, children, parents, friend, comfort. They make bullets their children and the letters of their wives as pillows. Mark here the heart-rending lines of a soldier:

Do you know my darling?
How I serve our nation
As well as remember you? (32)

In the poem 'To a modern friend' the poet satirizes the mad running of man after western civilization to be known as modern one. He says:

Overall freedom to children
Meant for you their good growth;
But in the expanse of freedom
Without any moral hedges
Life gathers decadence. (Melody of Wounds 37)

In the end of the poem, poet gives a very funny statement which makes the atmosphere somewhat light:

The shoes of alien traditions

Always pinch the wearers. (Melody of Wounds 37)

The above lines and the poems like ‘Kashmir: Paradise-on Earth’, Love poem: I’, and ‘Love poem II’ can be called the poetic relief amid the chaotic atmosphere.

Thus, in a satiric tone, Nar Deo Sharma has tried to take out the wounds on the civilization which had been so ancient and glorious. The collection may be termed as the preventing agency of ills and chaos waving in atmosphere. He has used his sharp intellect to explore these wounds. Yet the word ‘Melody’ in the title of the book appears to make us feel that the poet is still hopeful to win the battle against these prevalent ills of the society. Dr. Satish Kumar comments:

He aims at refining and purging the polluted human sensibilities by bringing them to exposure... A hardcore realist and humanist, he poetizes his observations, sensibilities and experience in chiselled expression, apt and polished diction, evocative symbol, hard-hitting irony and satire, simple, clear and lucid language”. (Melody of Wounds 38)

References:

Melody of Wounds. Sharma, Nar Deo Alwar: Ideal English Publications, 2007.